

Harry Potter & the Return to Honeychurch Institute of Magic

By Darkmoore

Second story in the Honeychurch series.

Chapter One: The Meeting

Monday morning Harry Potter enters the office located at 206 Diagon Alley, which just happen to be the main administrative offices of the Sirius Black Memorial Child Care Facility. Ginny Weasley, who was appointed by Harry, is the one and only chief administrative officer for the facility, had her offices here and was expecting him to come by, as they had a very important meeting with the Board of Governors of the Facility that day.

Harry knocks on the door of the private entrance to the office and heard a faint “Come in.” and did so.

“Harry, I didn’t expect to see you so soon today.” Ginny exclaimed as she hugged him.

“Hey Gin, what’s going on around here these days?” he asked of his favorite employee.

“Other than this meeting with the board of governors, there’s not much to worry about. Though I’m sure the kids would love it if you came by the common room of the facility since you’re here today.” Ginny said with a little bit of hope in her voice.

Harry smiled and said, “I think I would like that very much.”

“Excellent.”

“Now what can you tell me about this little boy that has everyone up in arms?” Harry asked.

“Well, there’s not much to tell, mostly because I don’t know that much about the situation myself. I know he spent almost his entire life with the spinster aunt I was telling you about and that all of his other relatives are all dead, though I’m not sure how.”

Harry gave her a puzzled look.

“Professor Dumbledore vouched for him to come here. He said something about Death Eaters caused this to happen to him or something to that effect.”

“Is Albus coming to today’s meeting?”

Ginny sighed and said, “No he declined, as he was unable to reschedule another meeting he is attending.”

“Damn.”

“I know I would have liked for him to be here also, but he said you would know what to do.”

“What do we know about the aunt?” Harry asked going in a new direction to learn as much as possible before the meeting today.

“I know that she was a pureblood witch from an old family called, Tinsia Odran. However, the boy is a half blood, and though there were a strong following in the dark arts in the Odran family, she was not a known practitioner of them.”

“Odran? I’ve heard of that name before somewhere. I wonder ...” Harry thought aloud.

“Sorry I couldn’t dig up anything more on the family or about the boy. However, Dumbledore was adamant that you were to have all say so in the boy’s life.”

“What?” Harry asked, “Why would Albus want me to be in charge of the boy’s life, I don’t even know him.”

Ginny just sat from behind her desk and shrugged.

“Where the boy now?”

“Probably off playing somewhere all alone, he’s not very sociable. Then again with his only family just dying, he may be in a state of shock.”

“Hasn’t he been to see a healer? That’s standard practice for the facility isn’t it?” Harry asked.

“Normally, I would say yes, but he refuses to let anyone near him.”

“I see,” Harry said and then changed the subject, “Have you found out why the board is so against him being in the facility?”

“Not a word. They’re being rather tight lipped about this one. They just make demands that he be sent away, to Azkaban preferably or that he be killed. I believe the word ‘abomination’ was used in describing him.”

‘Abomination?’ Harry mouthed clearly not understanding a thing about this situation.

“I don’t understand it either and neither does Mrs. Tonks.” Ginny said and then looked at the clock. “It’s almost time for the meeting; we’d better get going to the

conference room.”

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A short time later Harry and Ginny were sitting in the conference room that was down the hall from her office as the other attendees were arriving and taking their seats.

“Alright then,” Harry said as he looked around the room, “if everyone is here, then let’s get started shall we?”

“Wait one moment Mis... excuse me Professor Potter, but we are missing a person.” said the ancient looking Governor Stoddard Kaelan.

“Oh, yes, Professor Dumbledore sent word he would not be able to attend this meeting today, he did want to. He has sent his apologies for his absence.” Harry said and noticed that several people were actually happy that Dumbledore wasn’t going to be at the meeting.

“Actually, we have another person that’s been invited to the meeting who is coming.” Kaelan replied again.

“Really, I wasn’t informed of any other people to this meeting. Who are we waiting on?”

“Me.” said a voice and Harry looked over to the door and saw the Minister of Magic, Amelia Bones standing in the doorway.

“Minister Bones, how nice to see you again, please have a seat.” Harry said with a smile to his friend.

“Thank you Harry, and please call me Amelia. After all we’ve been through together I think we could be considered friends.”

“Very well Amelia, let’s get started here, as I’m sure you’re very busy as always. Now please let me begin by saying that I am not up to speed with the current situation, as I’ve been teaching at the Honeychurch Institute of Magic this year and just found out about this child at our graduation ceremony and couldn’t give him any attention until today. Can someone please tell me why he can’t be allowed to become a part of the Facility?”

No one said a word, well at first anyway, then Governor Kaelan asked, “Why did you go ahead and put this boy into the facility after we all turned him away?”

“Well, as I just said, I was away at school teaching and couldn’t come until now. Also the boy needed somewhere to sleep and something to eat and I was NOT about to send a five year old out into the streets to fend for himself. Frankly I was shocked to learn that most of this board was willing to do just that.”

“Actually Harry, they weren’t just going to throw the boy into the streets, they wanted to turn him over to me.” Amelia said.

“Did you want to adopt him?” Harry asked confused, but delighted that someone so high up in the ministry would do something that kind.

“Not exactly, Harry. They wanted me to incarcerate the boy.”

“WHAT?” Harry asked horrified causing several of the governors to grumble.

“Harry please calm down. I didn’t mean to offend you.” Amelia said, and went on, “Have you talked to the boy yet?”

“No, I’ve not even met him yet; I just arrived to the offices this morning. I don’t even know his first name yet. I just know he’s from the Odran family.”

“Perhaps, it would be best if you actually spoke to him before we continue with the meeting.” Amelia said soothingly.

“I have no problem meeting with him and in fact plan to do so after the meeting. What I do not understand is why this board wants him gone so badly and won’t even tell me or the chief administrator of this facility.” Harry said heatedly.

“Why don’t we simply bring the boy here, Minister Bones?” Andromeda Tonks asked.

No one seemed to want to respond to the question, but Harry did. “What a good idea Ginny would you please bring him in so I can meet him?”

“Sure thing Harry.” then she was gone to fetch the boy.

“Do you think it’s wise to bring him in here?” Governor Toland Garwood asked.

“Why not? He’s five years old, what he going to do paint you into a corner? Harry asked becoming irritated at their behavior towards a small child.

A few moments later, Ginny came back with the timid looking boy in her arms and she sat him down in a chair Harry had conjured for him.

The boy looked around at all the people seated at the table and was afraid and tried to hide behind Ginny’s robes.

“It’s alright, we won’t hurt you.” Harry said to him trying to get him to come out on his own.

The boy looked around the room and the last person he looked at was Harry and in a whisper the boy said, “I know you.”

The sudden speech from the child stunned Ginny, he hadn’t spoken a word since he arrived and the other board members jumped in shock and in fear. Harry ignored them all and remained his focus on the boy.

“Just how do you know me exactly?” he asked expecting some answer similar to

books or newspaper.

However, the boy answered, still in a whisper, "I've seen you in my dreams."

Not expecting this answer Harry asked "In your dreams? What am I doing in your dreams?"

"Sometimes riding a broom with some kids, sometimes teaching big kids in school, talking to a picture and sometimes smooching a girl." Then he giggled and hid his face again.

"Well, I'll admit it; I've done all those things." Harry said with a laugh making the boy feel better. Harry continued, "We've been having a meeting to decide what to do with you."

"Why?" the boy asked.

"Well, we need to do something with you, now don't we?"

The boy shrugged, but said nothing.

"Do you like it here at the facility?" Harry asked.

The boy shrugged again.

"Do you want to go somewhere else?"

Again the boy shrugged his shoulders.

Harry laughed and said, "Come on Mr. Odran, I'd like to hear you speak. Big boys always answer that way."

"My name isn't Odran, that was Aunt Tincy's name."

"I'm sorry, let me introduce myself to you. My name is Harry Potter. What's your name?"

"Tommy."

"I'm very pleased to meet you Tommy. Do you have a last name?"

Tommy nodded his head.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"My name is Tommy Riddle."

Then Ginny Weasley turned pure white and fainted away.

Chapter Two: What To Do With The Boy

“Ginny?” Harry asked trying to wake his friend up.

Nothing, she was still out cold.

Then Harry took his wand out and pointed it at her and said “Eneverate.” Then she woke up.

Everyone in the room had gathered around Ginny to see if she were alright, ignoring the boy who had made her faint in the process. Tommy himself was clutching onto Harry’s robes for dear life, as he was very afraid and only seemed to talk to Harry for some reason.

“What happened?” Ginny asked a bit embarrassed to be found on the floor.

“You fainted my dear, you had a little shock and you fainted.” said Bathilda Pembroke who helped her up.

“Thank you Bathilda, but what made me faint.”

“Probably that little abomination over there.” snarled Stoddard Kaelan as pointed to the boy trying to hide behind Harry’s leg. “He should be put away immediately.”

“Other than having an unpopular name, what has this child done? What is his horrible crime?” Harry asked refusing to admit that he was starting to feel like the other board members.

“Harry has a valid question, what proof do you even have that he is any relation to the other Tom Riddle?” Andromeda asked.

“Your right Madame Tonks, he is not a relative of You Know Who, but rather is You Know Who.” Amelia Bones said with conviction.

“How is this possible?” Harry asked, and then remembered that Tommy was tugging at his robes. “What is it Tommy?”

“I don’t like it here.” Tommy whispered to Harry.

“Scruff” Harry called for the house elf.

With a pop he cantankerous looking house elf appeared. “Yes Master Harry?” he asked in a rough deep voice for a house elf.

“Please take young Tommy here down to the kitchen to get him something to eat and make sure no adult witch or wizard comes near him until I saw so.” Harry instructed the elf and then turned to the boy. “Tommy, I want you to go with Scruff, he’ll keep you safe until I can talk to you later. Okay?”

Together the house elf and the scared little boy trot off to find something in the

kitchens.

“There is no way in hell that kid is staying with the other children Harry, don’t even think it.” Ginny demanded.

Harry took off his glasses, pinched the bridge of his nose and sat back down in his chair.

Harry suddenly felt very tired as he asked, “Can some one please explain to me how it is we’ve found ourselves in this situation?”

“I’m not entirely certain myself Harry, but from what I have found out, Tinsia Odran is a long time friend of Albus Dumbledore’s and she has raised the boy since he was a baby.” Amelia told him.

“I need to have a very long talk with Albus Dumbledore it seems.”

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Sometime later after Harry had convinced the board not to have the boy kissed by a Dementor and somehow managed to calm Ginny down, she had become the most outspoken about sending him to Azkaban, well at least he convinced them to wait until he had the chance to talk to the boy and to Dumbledore.

Harry began to look for Scruff and the boy finally finding them in the kitchens still.

“Master Harry?” Scruffed asked when he saw him in the doorway.

“Hey Scruff, hey Tommy.” Harry said to them, “What are you two up to down here?”

“Nothing” Tommy said which made Harry look at the elf.

“We’s just eating cookies, Master Harry.” which caused him to smile.

“Tommy I need to talk to you, would you mind answering some questions for me?”

The boy just shrugged his shoulders.

“I’ll take that as a ‘yes’ then. Other than in your dreams, do you remember meeting me at all?”

Tommy shook his head ‘no.’

“Have you ever met and seen Ginny, the red haired lady before you came here?”

Tommy thought for a moment and again shook his head no.

Then Harry brought out a stack of wizarding photographs and asked “Now Tommy do you recognize anyone in these pictures?” Harry let the boy look at the pictures.

Tommy looked at all the pictures and pointed to only one.

“Who is that Tommy?” Harry asked.

“Uncle Albie.”

“Uncle Albie?” Harry asked.

He nodded his head in response to Harry’s question.

“Well Tommy, why don’t you go along and play with the other children in the common room and I need to call up your Uncle Albie and see what he has to say.”

“Does this mean I’ll go and live with Uncle Albie?” Tommy asked.

“I don’t know, do you want to?”

Tommy shrugged making Harry think the boy didn’t like to talk. Which made Harry think this couldn’t possibly be Voldemort, he never seemed to shut up, especially when fighting him.

“Scruff here will look after you until I can come back and talk to you again.”

“Okay.”

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Several minutes later, Harry stormed into Ginny’s office, where he was shocked to see that Amelia was still there and having a private conversation with Ginny.

“Ginny, do you mind if I use your fire to call Dumbledore? Gee thanks.” he said rather quickly and gathered some floo powder in his hand and threw it into the fire and called “The office of Albus Dumbledore, Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.”

A few moments later, the head of Albus Dumbledore appeared in the fire. “Ah Harry, always nice to you again, is there anything I can do for you?”

“Actually sir there is something I need a little bit of help with.” Harry said calmly before exploding, “WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU? THAT BOY IS VOLDEMORT, I THOUGHT I KILLED THAT MAN YEARS AGO, ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT HE HAS SOMEHOW SURVIVED AND IS NOW A FIVE YEAR OLD LITTLE BOY!!!”

“Ah, I see you figured that already. Most unfortunate.”

“UNFORTUNATE?” Ginny bellowed. “You vouched for this kid for Merlin’s sake Professor. You know what he’s done to me, to Harry to everyone in the wizarding world.”

“Oh yes, nice to see you too Ms. Weasley. I didn’t see you there. It is still Ms. Weasley isn’t it? You and Harry haven’t finally gotten together have you?”

Harry and Ginny looked murderous at their former Headmaster, but Amelia spoke next, “Albus, let’s do stay on topic for once shall we, this is a matter of grave importance.”

“Ah, Amelia, your there also. What a nice little reunion you have going on over there.” Dumbledore said with a chuckle.

“Albus!” all three said warningly.

“Perhaps it would be best if we have this conversation in person, instead of over the fire, I’ll be the main office of the Child Care Facility directly.” Then he was gone from the fire.

“I swear he gets barmier as he gets older.”

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Albus Dumbledore arrived just in time to have lunch with Harry and Ginny. Amelia had also stayed to hear what the aged wizard had to say for himself. In fact she had put off her other affairs in order to do it. Albus wanted to have young Tommy join them, but Ginny had adamantly refused the boy to come into her office.

“There is no way; I am letting him near me again. After what he did to me when I was in first year? No.”

“Ginny,” Albus said soothingly, “He is not the same person he was back then, thanks to Harry.”

“That’s the part I’m a bit vague on, the ‘thanks to Harry’ part. How in the hell did this happen?” Harry said to them.

At this point Albus conjures a squishy chair for himself and sets down in it and begins. “Harry, tell me what you remember of the day of the final battle.”

“Well I remember Dobby waking me up that morning by throwing me down the stairs of the boy’s dormitory and me landing in the middle of the common room wearing nothing but my boxers. Then I remember Parvati and Seamus pulling my boxers off and me running back up the stairs.”

Ginny grabbed Amelia’s arm and said quietly, “That was a very good day for all of us.”

“Then I remember eating breakfast, waiting for the great hall to be cleared and then sitting down for the written exam in Defense Against the Dark Arts when they attacked. I remember being utterly exhausted and I remember dueling with Lucius Malfoy and Voldemort killing him, wanting the pleasure himself. I remember us both casting our killing curses at each other and then being asleep.” Harry explained.

“Are you certain you cast the killing curse?” Albus asked.

“I thought so; I’ve been so certain I did all these years.” responded Harry, trying to make sure he was certain of the facts of that long ago day.

“Actually Harry, I think Voldemort cast the killing curse, because I saw it hit you square in the chest. However, I think you cast a different spell altogether, I think you cast the charm of making.”

“What?” the other three occupants of the room chimed in together.

“That spell is a myth, it doesn’t really exist.” Amelia insisted.

Ginny then said, “I’ve never heard of it, what is the charm of making.”

“Yes, it does, Professor Thorgood taught it to me in my last year. He said it can’t be learned through books or by hearing the incantation. It can only be learned through intent.” Harry told them, “Plus, whatever magic you use it for will affect the person you cast it on and yourself equally.”

“I don’t understand.” Ginny said looking around to see if anyone else was lost. Amelia was as well.

“You see ladies, the charm of making can be used as both curse and blessing, it is the intent of the caster that makes it one way or another, light or dark. The incantation itself isn’t a light or a dark magic, but the intent with which you use it.” Albus explained.

“Harry do you remember using that spell that day?” Amelia asked.

“No, but that part of the day is not to clear anymore, with all of the dead bodies laying around, friends, teachers, examiners and Death Eaters. I just wanted it all to be over with, and wanted live a life without Voldemort, I wanted to be happy and to be free of all of that.”

“Precisely Harry, which must have been the intent you used that day. You wanted a fresh start, not to kill him, not to make anyone suffer, but a new start on life. And because the caster is also the victim of the charm, when it struck him it would have also struck you and that’s what saved your life that day.” Albus said sagely.

“So the question becomes Albus, is the boy Tommy or is he Voldemort? Does he have any memories of his other life?” Amelia asked.

“I questioned him after the board meeting, and the only thing he knows prior to Tinsia Odran dying is ‘Uncle Albie.’” Harry said with a pointed look at Dumbledore. “You wouldn’t know anything about that now would you Albus?”

“Well, yes, I do suppose I owe you an explanation of that don’t I?” chuckled Albus.

“That would be nice. I would like to know why I was completely left in the dark about this boy and then to find out I am somehow his legal guardian.” Harry said with annoyance in his voice.

“I left him Tinsia’s care because she needed someone to look after. She had just lost the last few members of her family to the Death Eaters and needed someone to love and look after.”

“The Odran family was filled with dark practitioners Albus, plus two of them were Death Eaters.” Amelia informed the group.

“Yes, but Tinsia wasn’t, she never used dark magic to my knowledge.” Albus countered.

“It doesn’t matter now, she’s dead, what do we do with the boy?” asked Harry.

“He’s harmless now; there is nothing left in him that was what Voldemort was at all.”

“Really?” Harry asked, “Then how do you explain the fact that he can see me in his dreams?”

Albus looked shocked, “I can’t.”

Chapter Three: It's Harry's Responsibility Now

“That’s not helpful Albus.” Harry said sarcastically.

“He has never once mentioned having dreams about you Harry, I promise you that. If I had known I would have investigated it further.”

“That’s probably because he only met Harry this morning at the meeting.” Amelia speculated.

“Possibly.” said Albus in deep thought.

“What do we do with him?” Ginny asked, “He can’t stay here, I won’t allow it, not after all the things he’s done.”

“He is Harry’s responsibility now.” Albus stated matter of fact.

“Yes, back to that topic, how is it that I am his guardian?” Harry asked with annoyance.

“Because he was admitted to the facility on your authorization.” Albus said to him.

“It’s true Harry,” Ginny added in, “all the children in the facility are your responsibility legally.”

“That’s only an intermediate guardianship, not a parental one.” Harry countered to Ginny, but turned to Albus and asked, “Is that what you meant? He is like the other children here legally?”

“Not quite Harry.”

Harry blew air through his teeth and ran his hand through his messy hair and said, “How did I know you were going to say that?”

Albus twinkled merrily at his former pupil.

“You want me to raise this boy don’t you?” Harry asked beginning to realize what it was Dumbledore was after. “You want me to take in the person who murdered my parents and give him the love of my heart? That’s asking a bit much, don’t you think?”

Amelia and Ginny were watching with fascination as this conversation unfolded between the two.

“Harry, Tom needs someone to love him, someone to teach him how not to hate. You’re the perfect person for the task.” Albus explained.

“The hell I am!” Harry bellowed.

Albus began to speak again, but Harry cut him off, “I have a life now, one that I have actually grown to love dearly. I have a woman in my life who loves me dearly and who I can love back without being afraid. I have a job that I am good at and love doing. For the first time in my life, I am doing the right thing at the right time for it to count for the greater good. I am not a child anymore, to be manipulated into doing things I don’t want to do. I will not allow myself to be forced into this. You decided to not include me in this matter six years ago and you can continue to leave me out of it.”

Albus was taken by surprise; this was not the reaction he had expected from Harry. He knew it would be an uphill fight to convince him, but this was an outright refusal to even think about it.

“What shall we do with him Harry? Give him to Amelia to be taken right off to Azkaban?” Albus asked.

Harry walked over to the fireplace and placed his elbow on the mantle and held his head and quietly replied, “Maybe that’s what he deserves for all the pain and misery he caused.”

Then Albus turned to Amelia and asked, “What do you think Minister, shall we pack the boy off to prison?”

“I’ve been slowly painted into a corner into doing just that. Though not too many people know about the boy’s true identity as yet, they will soon enough. The board of governors has made it clear, they want nothing to do with the boy and if Harry insists

he stay then they will go to the press with this.” Amelia said defeated.

“I agree, he must go.” Ginny said with loathing causing Harry to turn to her.

“I’ve never heard you be so cruel before Gin, even when Voldemort was alive and terrorizing the world.”

“I know,” Ginny rubbed her eyes and sighed, “It’s just that I don’t have in myself to love a child that had been that monster and may well be again someday.”

“Is there somewhere else he can go?” Amelia asked the Headmaster.

“No, there’s not, the only option we could possibly come up with is to send him to a boarding school for young magical children.”

“He’s not old enough for any of those.” Harry said.

“You are correct Harry; he needs to be six years old to get into the one that take children so young. Also there are no magical institutes that take children that young in Britain.” Albus replied.

“Where’s the closest?” Ginny asked

“There is one on the continent, De Zauberei Akademie of Switzerland, of course there are others, but that would be the closest to us.”

“I’ve heard of it Albus, but so you think they would take the boy?” Amelia asked.

“I would say not, but we would have to ask to be certain.”

Harry sighed, “What would be the best thing to do? I hope someone can tell me because I have no idea.”

“Perhaps, we should feel the need to decide this right now. I think a small break might do us some good.” Albus said sagely as the others nodded in agreement.

“I think I’ll go down and visit the children, see how many are actually coming to Hogwarts or follow the pied piper here to Honeychurch.” Albus said with a twinkle in his eye.

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Before they went down to the common room to visit the children, Amelia made her excuses and had to return to the Ministry, but promised Harry that she would do nothing about the boy until she heard from him officially.

Moments later Harry, Ginny and Albus entered the common room and were greeted by the children as they were happy to see ...

“HARRY.” they all screamed and mobbed him.

Ginny and Albus laughed as the children pulled him down to the floor and began to hug him, all the children except for one, a little boy who sat in the corner with very wet eyes.

“You’re killing me.” Harry called out to them, but they paid him no mind and continued what they were doing, but he laughed all the same.

Truth be told, Harry would have taken every single one of the children home with him and raised them as his own, but he knew he wasn’t up to the task of being a parent and Father Christmas is such a better role for him to play in their lives.

“Children.” bellowed Nanny Goodfine, “You mustn’t do that to Mr. Potter. He hasn’t come all this way to be buried under a pile of children.”

But this didn’t stop little Davey Watkins from countering, “He doesn’t care Nanny, he’s even laughing.”

Sensing an argument was about to erupt between the two, Harry stood up and said, “Alright, everyone I want to introduce you to my former Headmaster, Albus Dumbledore.” the children stopped what they were doing and stared at the elderly wizard.

Little Davey Watkins stepped up to him and said, “I know you; I have a chocolate frog card with your picture on it.”

Albus chuckled and said, “I have one too.” This caused the other children to laugh.

“Now everyone, why don’t we settle in a circle and let me tell you a story, a special story about a special little boy, a story about the boy who lived.”

The children became excited and did as their guest instructed them to do while Harry groaned at the thought of a story being told about him. However, his attention was snatched out of his thoughts by Albus, who looked over at Tommy Riddle, who was still in the corner all by himself.

Harry walked over to the boy and sat in one of the chairs, near where he was and said, “Tommy.”

Instantly the boy ran over to Harry and crawled into his lap and buried his head in Harry’s chest and sniffled repeatedly.

Harry was shocked to say the least, but he composed himself and asked, “Tommy is there something wrong? You can tell me about it.”

“No one likes me here.” he sniffled yet again.

“What makes you say that?” Harry wanted to know, not sure why.

“Those old people want me to go away and put me in jail. I didn’t do anything wrong,

I promise.” Tommy said and sniffed again.

“What about the children? They seemed to be playful and nice.”

“They don’t like me either.”

“Did they say that?” Harry asked, concerned that children were being cruel to each other.

“No one wants to play with me, because I don’t know how to play any games.”

“What did you do with your Aunt Tinsia before she passed on?”

“Sometimes we would play in the garden, I had a swing under a tree, sometimes we would listen to the wireless, sometimes she or one of the house elves would read to me. Sometimes I read to myself, I like to read.”

Harry thought about what he had just said and asked, “Have you started school yet?”

“No, Aunt Tincy was teaching me herself. She said she could do a better job than any teacher at school. Uncle Albie over there thought it was a good idea.”

“I’m sure he did.” Harry said looking at Albus talking to the group of captivated students.

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Later that night, when Harry returned to Grimmauld Place he stumbled into the sitting room and flopped on to the couch and called, “Dobby.”

The house elf popped in and asked, “Yes Harry Potter is you needing something?”

“A friend.” He said with a smile to the elf which made Dobby beam with delight. “Besides the two of us is there anyone else at home?”

“Winky is down in the kitchen making dinner and Master Remus and Master Tonks are in the library with your Missy Vesta.”

“Vesta is here? When did she arrive?” Harry asked, suddenly glad that she was much closer than he originally thought.

“She is arriving about an hour ago Harry Potter.”

“Good. Wait a sec, did you just call Tonks ‘Master Tonks’?”

“Yes, Harry Potter.”

“Why?”

“Because she is yelling at me for calling her Missy Nymphadora.” Dobby explained.

Harry fell off of the couch laughing.

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A short time later, the others found Harry still in the sitting room.

“What’s wrong Harry, you look terrible.” Remus said to the younger man.

“I’ve had a very troubling day.”

Vesta walked over to him to kiss the weary man, but he instead pulled her down onto his lap and kissed her instead.

“What’s wrong?” she asked gently. “Is this about the boy you received that letter about last week?”

“Yes, it is. Maybe everyone should sit down.”

Remus and Tonks took seats in the room and Vesta attempted to move onto the couch, but Harry held her tight in place and whispered, “Please, stay so I can feel your warmth.”

She complied but gave him a worried look.

“Alright Harry what’s gotten you so upset and tired?” Remus asked again.

“The board of governors want to put the boy in Azkaban. At first I fought them on it, not knowing why and they wouldn’t tell me anything as usual.” Harry recapped.

“Why don’t you get new board members?” Tonks asked sarcastically.

“After today’s meeting, I’m not so sure they aren’t correct.”

“Why is that Harry?” asked Remus.

“The boy is Tom Riddle.”

Tonks and Remus were stunned into silence but Vesta was confused.

“Harry, who’s Tom Riddle and why is that a bad thing?”

Harry gave her a weak smile and said “Tom Riddle is the birth name that was given to Voldemort.”

“Just because someone was cruel and gave him that name is no reason to treat a child like this.” Vesta began before Harry cut her off and filled in a small piece of the puzzle that she seems to have missed.

“The boy is Voldemort.”

Chapter Four: A Decision is Reached

“WHAT!” Vesta bellowed.

“I said that the boy is Voldemort.” Harry repeated.

“What’s going to happen to the boy?” Remus asked.

“Tonight he’s staying at the Facility, where he has been all week, but Ginny told me that tomorrow he had to go or she would.”

“I don’t blame her Harry, what are you gonna do with him?” asked Tonks , as it was now her turn to speak, or at least she thought so.

“I have no idea, Dumbledore wants me to bring him here and raise him like he was my own son.” Harry sighed.

The room was silent for a moment before ...

“NO WAY!”

“ABSOLUTELY NOT!”

“I don’t think that would be the best thing for you Harry.”

“Doesn’t you’s worry Harry Potter, we’s can be taking care of a little boy. You’s is needing children in you’s life.”

Harry was stunned, first because Vesta removed herself from his lap and began to pace the room and then second due to Dobby launching himself across the room and hugging him.

“I half way expected Tonks’ reaction to the news, but the rest of you have me stunned. I didn’t say I was going to take him in. That’s what Dumbledore wants me to do.” Harry said to the group.

“You’ll do what he wants, you always do.” Tonks said bitterly.

“Do you see him here?” Harry countered snappishly.

“No, but you’ll have him here tomorrow.” Tonks said equally snappish. “Do you even know what that man is capable of Harry?”

“No Nymphadora, why don’t you tell me exactly? Give me a minute to bring my parents into the room so you can explain it to all of us.” Harry said back to the Auror as he stood from the couch and stared into her eyes.

“Sorry Harry,” she said sheepishly, “but you can’t bring him into this house.”

“I know that. Do you think I want him in my life at all?”

“What are you going to do with him Harry?” Remus asked calmly, the only one in the room who seemed to be at the moment.

“I’ll get some out of the way cottage and put him there with one of the nannies from the facility. Nanny Zinnia Talmadge said she would take him on for the summer.”

“Not our holiday cottage? Harry you promised me a private holiday with just the two of us. I do not want that CHILD, there at all.” Vesta said angrily.

Harry was shocked; he had never seen her act this way in the time he knew her. Not even during the Draco/ Blaise/ Veela thing a couple of months ago.

“Don’t worry Vesta, that cottage is not what I had in mind for him. I was thinking something in the mists of Wales perhaps. Somewhere far enough from London so I don’t have to deal with him on a daily basis, but not too far for me to get to him if I needed to.” Harry explained.

This seemed to satisfy the two witches and the werewolf, but a certain house elf still had something to say in the matter.

“Harry Potter, you’s can’t be sending a little boy away likes that.” Dobby scolded. “He is needing you to take care of him and no one’s else.”

Harry was stunned by Dobby’s reaction, having known that all house elves were happy when Voldemort fell. Then he remembered something from when he was in the infirmary right after Voldemort fell.

“Dobby, did you know about Voldemort being turned into a baby?”

“Eh, er, well, Harry Potter ...” Dobby said before popping away.

“DOBBY?” all four said at once.

Expecting the elf to return they waited a moment, but instead they found Ron and Hermione entering the sitting room looking flushed.

“Harry!” Hermione screamed, “I’m so glad your home.”

Harry was happy to see his two best friends, but didn’t want to have this conversation all over again.

“What’s wrong, mate?” Ron asked.

“Yeah Harry tell him what’s wrong.” Tonks said.

“Have either of you spoken to Ginny today?” Harry asked.

They both responded, “No.”

“Then you better sit down and I’ll explain it all to you.” Harry then spent the next few minutes doing just that. From the stunned and panicked looked on their faces, he was expecting another explosion.

“WHAT?” they exploded together.

“Harry you can’t take him in, he’s evil for Merlin’s sake.” Ron bellowed.

“What was Dumbledore thinking?” Hermione asked out loud clearly her mind was racing thinking about this problem as she had a habit of doing.

“I think the board is right, send him straight off to Azkaban.” Ron stated clearly and Tonks agreed.

Then an argument broke out in the room, each person having a different idea of what to do with the boy.

Finally Hermione had enough and screamed, “I want to meet him!”

“Are you mental?” Ron asked his girlfriend.

“Think about it Ron, Dumbledore says he’s perfectly safe, he’s been in the facility for a week and no one is worse off for it and it’s obvious to me, that we can’t force our opinions down Harry’s throat like this without knowing all of the facts. Therefore I want to meet Tom Riddle.”

“But Hermione ...” Ron began.

“There are no buts about it Ron. I’m meeting him!” Hermione said and stamped her foot to drive the point home. Ron didn’t bother to reply as he didn’t want to be spending the night on the couch on their first night together in their new flat.

“Now why don’t we go and eat? Ron and I have some exciting news to tell everyone.”

* * * * *

Later that night after Ron and Hermione had revealed the big news that they were now living together which brought the reaction of “It’s about time” from Tonks. Harry managed to get Dobby alone to ask him a couple of questions.

“Dobby, I’m not mad with you or anything, but did you know about Voldemort being turned into a baby?”

Dobby wrung the hem of his maroon jumper and stalled for a few minutes, but finally gave an answer, “Yes Harry Potter, I’s was knowing the truth.”

“Why didn’t you tell me?” asked Harry.

“Dumbledore was saying not to. You’s had a long time in the infirmary and miss’s out

on you's graduation. He's not wanting to burden you with it. I's took care of the baby until I quits to work for you's Harry Potter." Dobby explained.

"Did Dumbledore tell you to come work for me?"

"No sir, Harry Potter, after the baby was taken away, I's telling him I's is working only for you's for now on."

Harry smiled, "I'm glad you did Dobby. No one has ever looked after me like you have."

The house elf beamed.

* * * * *

Sometime later Harry enters his bedroom to find Vesta already in bed.

"Vesta, are you asleep?" he asked gently in case she was.

She rolls over and says, "No, I'm not, I was waiting for you to come to bed."

Harry sat on his side of the bed and begins to take his shoes off and without facing her, he asks, "Are you going to break up with me?"

She sits up and wraps her arms around him and says, "I'm not planning on it, but I guess I could if you wanted me to." Then she bites his ear playfully.

"Even if I end up being stuck with the boy?" he asks, hoping he isn't losing her forever.

"You won't be stuck with him Harry. No one in their right mind would think of doing that to you."

"We'll see. I was told of a magical boarding school in Switzerland that takes children as young as six years old. He should be six by the time school starts; do you think they would take him?"

"You could always write and find out." Vesta cooed in his ear making his eyes flutter from excitement.

"I'll do that tomorrow." He said as he pulled off his robes and began to climb into bed with her.

"No-no, you won't need these tonight." she said with an exotic influx in her voice and then she pulls his boxers off of him and throws them onto the floor.

* * * * *

The next morning, bright and early, well this is Harry after all, so its not that early, Harry wakes up and extracts himself from the beautiful woman that has her arms and

legs tangled up with his own and makes his way down to the kitchen for his morning cup of coffee.

“Morning Winky”

“Good morning Master Harry. What would you’s like for breakfast?” Winky asked.

“Lots of coffee until I wake up, I need to write a letter this morning before I do anything else. Also, I want to wait for Vesta to wake up so we can eat together.”

“Master Harry’s sweetie is a nice missy.”

“Yeah she is.” Harry responded before taking his cup of coffee up to the library to write a letter concerning Tommy to the Headmaster of the De Zauberei Akademie of Switzerland.

One way or another he would have options about the boy.

Chapter Five: Remembering the Cupboard

Early the next morning Harry was in the kitchen of Grimmauld Place getting his morning cup of coffee when he heard someone entering the room from behind him. He thought it was either Vesta coming down to join him or Hermione who was coming over to get him in order to visit the boy at the facility.

‘Boy?’ Harry thought, ‘I must stop calling him that, I’m beginning to sound like Vernon Dursley.’

When Harry turned around with cup in hand, he found neither Vesta nor Hermione. There standing in his kitchen was a very red faced Molly Weasley, on the verge of one of her patented explosions.

“HARRY JAMES POTTER!” she bellowed at him.

‘Middle name, I must be in trouble.’ he thought as he sipped his coffee.

“HAVE YOU COMPLETELY LOST YOUR GOOD SENSE? TAKING IN THAT DEMON CHILD AFTER ALL HE HAS DONE TO OUR WORLD? I CAN’T BELIEVE THAT YOU WOULD DISGRACE YOUR PARENTS LIKE THIS. WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?”

Harry suddenly remembered the time when he was twelve, after he and Ron had crashed the Ford Anglia in to the Whomping Willow and she had sent that howler. He sat there guilty and wished he had someone to love him enough to send him a howler. Sometimes you should be careful for what you wish for.

“I did not take him in. Dumbledore pushed him off onto me and I only found out about him the same time as everyone else did. Dumbledore kept him a secret from everyone, especially me, because he believes that the child has been cleansed of his former evil and wanted to give him a chance to be loved for the first time in his life.”

Harry calmly explained to the red faced tornado of a woman.

This explanation had smothered some of the fire in his pretend mother's fury, but not all.

"What are you going to do with the boy, Harry. You can't take him in and raise him like he was your son, it just wouldn't be right."

"I sent a letter to the Headmaster of a boarding school in Switzerland that accepts magical children at age of six years and older. When Hedwig gets back with his letter, I'll know more."

"Is that wise, Harry, to give him a magical education?" Mrs. Weasley asked worriedly.

"Would you rather I cast him to the Dementors to be kissed and to rot away on Azkaban? I apparently didn't have it in me to kill a full grown dark wizard when I was eighteen, there no way I can do something worse to a child that may or may not have any memory of his former life." Harry said as he sat down at the table defeated.

"Oh Harry." She said and wrapped her arms around him and brought his head to her bosom to comfort him as she would any of her children.

"What do you think I should do with him?"

She sighed and thought about it for a moment and said, "If you had asked me an hour ago, I would have had an answer for you, but now, I have no idea."

"Damn."

She chuckled.

* * * * *

Not too long after, Harry and Mrs. Weasley were joined by Vesta and they were having a pleasant breakfast, when Hermione finally arrived.

"Good morning, dear." she said to her soon to be daughter in law. Ron hadn't proposed or anything, but Mrs. Weasley had already decided they were getting married whether they liked it or not.

"Molly? I didn't expect you here this morning."

Vesta laughed and said, "It seems she felt the need to hand deliver him a howler this morning." Both Harry and Mrs. Weasley smirked.

"That wasn't a howler honey. That was her normal 'I'm angry and you're so getting it' voice." Harry explained.

Hermione laughed as she saw the look on the potion mistress' face. She then turned to her best friend and said, "Are you ready Harry? I want to meet Tommy as soon as

possible.”

“You’re going to meet the boy too? Why would you want to?” Mrs. Weasley asked.

“Well, Dumbledore says that he’s harmless now and from what Harry said about him, he doesn’t sound like anything I’ve come to expect from the Dark Lord of Evil.” Hermione explained. “Besides, I just plain curious.”

“Well, I guess I’m as ready as I’ll ever be.” signed Harry, not really wanting to deal with this problem at all.

“I’ve got to be going as well; I have a whole house to clean.” Mrs. Weasley said and then left the kitchen.

“Are you going to be here when I get back?” Harry asked Vesta.

“No.”

“What?” Hermione asked, thinking they had just broken up.

“I’m going to visit my mother for a few days. I already had it planned when his happened and I knew Harry would need someone to talk to. Of course, I had no idea how big it end up being.”

Relief spread across Hermione’s face, she knew how much this woman meant to Harry and how hurt he would be without her.

“Well, we had better be going then.” Then the pair apparated directly to Diagon Alley.

* * * * *

After a short walk and more importantly a small private talk, Harry and Hermione found Number 206 Diagon Alley in next to no time at all and walked up to Ginny’s office.

Harry knocked on the door and opened it, calling, “Gin, are you busy?”

“Morning Harry.” she replied in a monotone voice, which sadden Harry.

“Ginny, I’m so sorry about yesterday.” He said as he and Hermione walked into the room.

“Morning, Hermione.” Ginny said a bit more cheerfully. She sighed and returned to Harry, “I know deep down that it’s not your fault, but I also know that some how and in some manner you’re going to do the wrong thing.”

“What would be the wrong thing?” Hermione asked.

“Taking that boy in.” Ginny replied, making Harry’s stomach tighten like a knot.

Hermione sensing that Harry was getting upset by this again, took the lead, “Actually, I’ve come to meet him, to talk to him myself to see if he is indeed as evil as everyone says.”

Ginny smiled and said, “He should be in the common room, unless he’s being antisocial again.”

“We’ll look for him there then.” The bushy haired woman replied and grabbed Harry’s hand to go to the common room.

* * * * *

Before they two entered the common room, Harry halted Hermione and called “Scruff” and the house elf popped in.

“Yes Master Harry?” he asked in a scruffy voice.

“Do you know where Tommy Riddle is?” Hermione asked the elf, which caused the elf to frown.

“Yes.” and then popped away again.

Harry laughed and said, “He doesn’t like adults much.”

“Apparently.”

“Scruff” Harry called again and again the house elf popped in.

“Yes Master Harry?”

“Would you please tell us where Tommy Riddle is?” Harry asked hoping that Hermione wouldn’t be offended.

“He’s in his room reading a book.” Then Scruff popped away again.

“Well, at least it’s more than we knew before.”

* * * * *

After searching all the boy’s dormitory rooms, Harry and Hermione still hadn’t found young Tommy.

Growing very tired of this Harry once again called, “Scruff.”

“Yes Master Harry?”

“Is Tommy Riddle still in his room?”

“Yes Master Harry.”

“Where is his room then?” Harry asked, trying to stay polite.

“Not on this level Master Harry, he’s one level up.”

“Just one moment,” Harry said to the elf who was about to pop away again, “Why don’t you show us exactly where he is.”

Scruff humphed and then led the two up the stairs to the next level to Tommy’s room.

“Scruff? Aren’t these rooms used for storage and not for dormitory rooms?” Harry asked.

“Yes Master Harry.”

“Then why is Tommy up here?” asked Harry with annoyance beginning to rise.

“This is where he was asked to stay after you left yesterday.”

“Who put him up here all alone?” Harry asked through gritted teeth as his own childhood began to awaken in him.

“Nanny Lanthrop did Master Harry.”

“Does Ginny know about this?”

“I don’t know, Master Harry.” Then Scruff stopped at one of the doors and said “Here is his room.”

Hermione then knocked on the door and started to open it, but it was locked.

“Nanny Lanthrop locked him in.” Scruff said and popped away.

Now Harry was mad. Every thought about being locked in the cupboard under the stairs came back and he took out his wand and performed the unlocking charm. Then he and Hermione entered the room.

“Tommy?” Harry and Hermione called out together.

The little boy who was sitting in a corner looked up from his book and saw the two people standing in his room. He wasn’t sure how to react.

“Tommy?” Harry asked again. This time more gentle than before. “Are you alright?”

Hermione cocked her eyebrow in Harry’s direction as the boy scrambled to his feet and flung himself at Harry and sobbed.

Harry bent down on his knees and the boy sunk his head into Harry’s chest once again and whispered, “No one likes me here, can I go home?”

“We’ll be leaving in a little while, but first I want you to meet Hermione. Hermione,,

this is Tommy.”

Hermione bent at her waist and looked at the boy and said, “Hello, Tommy, I’ve been dying to meet you since last night.”

The boy sniffed and looked at her like she was mental, which cause Hermione to smile.

“Why don’t we go down to the common room and talk and play a game.”

Tommy looked up to Harry and then whispered to Hermione, “I don’t know how.” and then buried his head back into Harry’s chest.

“Don’t worry, she’s a really good teacher and she loves to read books, like you do and she can teach you a game or two I bet.” Harry said to him.

He nodded and the three of them left the room to go down stairs.

* * * * *

After Harry left Tommy and Hermione in the common room to have a discussion about books, he went directly to Ginny’s office to inquire why this child was locked away.

“Ginny?” he asked when he opened her office door.

She looked up from what she was doing and replied, “Hey Harry. Did you find him?”

“Yeah, we found him locked in a room on the floor above the dormitories. Why was he like that?”

“What?” Ginny asked completely surprised by the news.

“You heard me.” replied Harry coldly.

Knowing full well how Harry felt about the mistreatment of children after his own childhood experiences with the Dursleys, that had become their number one rule, ‘Never lock a child away as punishment!’

“I had no idea Harry I promise you.” Ginny said truthfully and was getting quite angry about it herself, even though the kid was Voldemort. “Do you know who did it to him?”

“Scruff says it was Nanny Lanthrop.”

“Yes, she was very vocal about him staying last night. She overheard one of the members of the board of governors talking about it as they left after the meeting yesterday morning.” Ginny remembered out load. “Do you want me to give her the sack?”

“Does she treat the other children like this?”

“Never, at least, not to my knowledge.” Ginny replied.

“Do with her as you wish, but I am taking him out of here today. Also, if Nanny Talmadge is still willing, I’ll be taking her as well.”

“I think Zinnia is still willing. I’ll talk to her and have one of the house elves pack the boy up.”

“Good, I’m going back down to the common room to talk to him and to Hermione. We’ll probably be on our way soon enough.”

Ginny nodded her head and Harry started to leave when she asked, “Harry?”

He turned and looked at her, “Yeah, Gin?”

“Between you and me, are we still ...”

“Yeah, Ginny, we’re family, of course, we’re good.”

Chapter Six: House Guests

Harry arrived back to Grimmauld Place later than he expected he would. He had taken Tommy and Nanny Talmadge to a secret location for safekeeping. Sitting at the writing desk in the library he remembered the conversation with Tommy before he left them for the night.

“Please Harry, please don’t go.” Tommy begged.

“I have to Tommy; this is where you and Nanny Talmadge will be staying for awhile until I get something better for you.” Harry explained.

“I could stay with you, I don’t take up much room, I promise.” Tommy said with tears starting to come down his face and flung himself into Harry’s arms to give him a big hug.

“I’ll be back tomorrow, I promise. Okay?”

“When?” Tommy asked.

“In the morning.” Harry said.

“Okay.” The boy said finally and letting Harry go.

Then Harry stood up and apparated away.

* * * * *

“What was the woman thinking locking him in that room all alone?” Harry asked angrily to no one but himself, before smacking his fist hard against the writing desk.

Harry then laid his head down on the desk and he heard Remus come in and ask, “Everything alright tonight Harry?”

“Yeah, I guess it is.”

“Where’s the little bundle of evil at?” Remus asked.

“I took Tommy and Nanny Talmadge to a safe place for awhile, but I have to go back tomorrow morning and see on them.”

Remus looked confused for a moment and then asked, “You’re not bringing him here?”

Harry sighed like he was defeated and exhausted and said, “I thought you and Tonks didn’t want him in the house. That was the impression everyone left me with last night.”

“I had a little talk with Tonks after Professor Sangeorge left today.”

“And?”

“I think she may have grown up a little since last night.”

Harry looked surprised. “Does that mean no more pink hair?”

Remus laughed, “I doubt that she’ll ever be that much of a grown up, but she does realize that you are stuck between the proverbial rock and a hard place. You are the one who has to deal with this problem and she needs to be more supportive of it.”

“I think you may be a ‘miracle worker’ Remus.”

“I’ve been called worse.”

* * * * *

The next morning Harry woke up and wasn’t quite sure where he was, which is often the case when you first wake. The only thing he did know for sure was the space next to him in was empty and cold. Someone was missing and as he became more alert, he realized that he missed Vesta.

Slowly Harry crawled out of his empty bed and made his way into the shower. Thinking that a nice cleansing shower would make him feel better, he couldn’t have been more wrong. The more awake and alert he was the more he realized that she wasn’t there with him.

“I can handle this for Merlin’s sake. I’m a grown man not some hormonal teenager on

his first date.” Harry said to the mirror in his bathroom as he began to brush his teeth.

“Of course you are, deary.” the mirror replied to him soothingly.

However, he didn’t have long to think about his loneliness as a sudden shower of owls descended upon him as soon as he entered the kitchen to have breakfast. Why is it always him?

As he began to collect his morning posts, he suddenly saw a red envelope fall to his plate at the table. Before the howler exploded, Harry said, “Good morning Narcissa.”

Dobby and Winky having gotten used to the almost daily howlers, retreated to the pantry as soon as they saw the red envelope.

“HARRY POTTER YOU LITTLE ABOMINATION! HOW DARE YOU TRICK MY SON INTO BONDING WITH SOMEONE WHO IS NOT HIS CHOSEN ONE! HAVE YOU ANY IDEA WHAT THIS COULD DO TO HIM? I AM ABSOLUTELY OUTRAGED BY YOUR SO CALLED BENEFICIAL BEHAVIOR AND AM TAKING THIS MATTER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MAGICAL LAW ENFORCEMENT THIS MORNING.”

Harry sat there sighing, “It’s always something isn’t it Narcissa?” However, the howler wasn’t finished.

“HOWEVER, TO KEEP YOURSELF OUT OF TROUBLE WITH THE MINISTRY I WILL PROPOSE A DEAL WITH YOU. GIVE ME BACK CONTROL OF THE BLACK FAMILY VAULTS AND NO ONE NEED HEAR OF THIS. THE CHOICE IS YOURS.” As her last words fell silent the howler burned itself into ashes.

“Nice try Narcissa, you’re not getting your hands on the money.” Harry said with a chuckle and banished the ashes to the fire.

“Good morning Master Harry.” Winky said as she emerged from the pantry. “What is you’s liking for breakfast this morning?”

“Coffee,” Harry said, thinking about it, “and anything else you have ready.”

“Harry Potter?” Dobby asked, “What is you’s doing with the boy?”

“I took him to a safe house last night, before coming back here.”

“Well, I’s is thinking that maybe you’s should be bringing him here.”

Harry stared the elf for a moment and asked, “Why?”

“Harry Potter is the most noblest and kindest of all wizards and the boy is needing that so’s he is not becoming a dark wizard again.” Dobby said, with large round pleading eyes.

Harry nodded his head and returned to reading his owl posts.

~Dear Mr. Potter,

Per your request, I have indeed stopped reporting the almost daily attacks by Mrs. Narcissa Malfoy to gain entry to the Black Family Vault. However, as you also requested, I have always informed you of when she attempts something new and unforeseen.

Yesterday morning, Mrs. Malfoy, along with her son, Mr. Draco Malfoy and her son-in-law, a Mr. Blaise Zabini, attempted to gain access to the Black Family Vault. Mr. Zabini, while using a disguise with the use of Polyjuice potion, attempted to fool the bank teller on duty that you have indeed relented and decided to give them a key to the vault.

They would have succeeded if it weren't for the fact that you requested a wand weighing as part of the procedure of giving out new keys to that vault. This, of course, failed to gain them entry, and they were expelled from the bank shortly thereafter.

After their abrupt departure from the bank I took it upon myself to contact the Department of Magical Law Enforcement to report their activities. You may be hearing from said department within a few days.

Gardoth

Gringott's Wizarding Bank.

"Sneaky little thing isn't she?" Harry asked no one in particular.

"Morning, Harry. Who's sneaky?" Tonks asked in the middle of a yawn.

"Your Aunt Cissy." Harry replied with a smirk.

"I heard her howler this morning. It woke me up."

"Sorry about that." Harry said sheepishly.

Tonks laughed, "It's not your fault she a complete and total bitch. Besides she's better than an alarm clock."

"You's should try working for her." Dobby said as he handed a plate to Tonks so she could eat breakfast.

Harry and Tonks laughed and Harry went to read more of his posts.

* * * * *

After they were all read, Harry sat at the kitchen table. One of the other letters was from Minister Amelia Bones, who had informed him that since he had taken the boy from the facility, she considered it to be Harry's responsibility to care for the boy and the ministry would not interfere with his decisions. Harry wasn't sure what to make of

it, but had expected this reaction from her. However, the last he read was from Nanny Talmadge and was something he needed to address soon.

Harry turned to Tonks and asked, "What would you think if we had a house guest this summer?"

Tonks gave him a smile and said, "You know I wouldn't mind having a gue..." she stopped suddenly and gave Harry a hard look and then asked, "What guest were you thinking of?"

"Ah, well, just a general question really."

"You're not bringing that man into this house Harry, I mean it."

"He's not a man, he's a boy and the man you're thinking of is dead." Harry said with a certainty that he had no idea where it came from.

"What did Hermione think of him?" Tonks asked suspiciously.

"Ask her yourself, she's just entered the kitchen."

Both Harry and Tonks turned to see Hermione standing in the doorway of the kitchen.

"Well?" Tonks asked the bushy haired woman.

"I think Harry should take him in."

"You're only saying that because you want him to be in your Spew conference." Tonks said with a smile.

"S.P.E.W.!" Hermione exclaimed, "And why would I say that just to get Harry into my conference?"

"Because most wizards and witches listen to whatever Harry says and does." Tonks said, giving Hermione something to think about.

"They do not." Harry said defensively. "You make it sound like people live and breath according to my whims." Harry definitely did not like where this conversation was heading.

"That doesn't matter now; we need to think about Tommy's needs at the moment."

"I do not want that man in this house." Tonks said again.

"Tonks," Hermione began, "he adores Harry. He needs someone he can look up to and who can give him what he needs. Besides he is not Voldemort, he's a five year old little boy."

"Who apparently is crying because I've not gotten there fast enough this morning." Harry said making the two women look at him oddly. "Nanny Talmadge sent me an

owl this morning.”

“You’re going to bring him here no matter what I say aren’t you?”

“No, I wouldn’t do that to you, but I would like it if you were more open to this idea.” Harry said.

“I need to think more about this.”

Hermione beamed, “Excellent. While you’re thinking it over, Harry and I need to go and visit Tommy. I have some books for him to read and you promised to look in on them this morning.”

Harry nodded his head and left the kitchen to getting ready to go.

* * * * *

“Harry!” screamed the pajama clad five-year-old when he and Hermione entered the house.

“Good morning, Tommy.” Harry replied as the boy hugged Harry’s knees causing Hermione to giggle.

“Good morning Professor, Madame.” Nanny Talmadge greeted them as she entered the room.

“Good morning Nanny Talmadge.” Hermione replied as Harry was doing his best not to topple over with his knees locked together from a 5-year-old’s hug. Luckily Tommy did let go and looked up at Harry.

“You’re late.”

“Am not.” Harry replied

“Are so.”

“Why is Harry late Tommy?” Hermione asked before this became a pouting match.

“Harry said he would be here first thing this morning and I’ve been awake forever.”

“I’m sorry, but I haven’t.” Harry said as he sat in a chair, “besides I thought you only got out of bed about an hour ago?”

“That’s forever when you’re five, Harry.” Hermione said.

Then Tommy crawled up into Harry’s lap while Hermione and Zinnia gave him knowing smiles.

“Tommy?” Harry asked, “How would you and Nanny Talmadge like to come and stay with me for a few days?”

“Really?” the boy asked looking up at Harry.

“Really, but remember it’ll only be for a few days. I have two conferences to attend and then I’m off to have a holiday with Vesta for part of the summer.”

“Are you taking me with you?” Tommy asked hopefully.

“Sorry, but this is a private holiday just for me and my girlfriend.”

Tommy made a face and asked, “Why do you need a girlfriend?”

Harry smiled and thought of Will Beagle.

Chapter Seven: Department of Magical Education Conference Begins

A few days later, after Harry had brought Tommy and Nanny Talmadge home with him to stay for a while, he was walking into the kitchen to have some breakfast when he found a certain house elf and a certain little boy playing under the table.

“Good morning Master Harry. What is you’s liking for breakfast?” Winky said to her employer.

“Coffee and whatever you’re making for a certain house guest will be fine.” Harry replied, as he had every morning since Tommy and Nanny Talmadge had arrived.

Harry sat at the table and knocked on it and said, “Good morning you two scoundrels.”

Dobby popped up on the top of the table and said, “Good morning Harry Potter.” While Tommy crawled up in between Harry’s legs and gave him a big hug and mumbled something in his shirt that sounded like “mood mornin”.

A few minutes later Remus, Tonks and Nanny Talmadge entered the kitchen to also have breakfast. Remus ruffled the boy’s hair and said “good morning” to him, but Tonks kept her distance and went to get something to drink. This was good, because she scared Tommy and she knew it.

As she took her seat, Tommy scooted closer to his nanny and Harry threw a frown her way. “Tonks,” Harry said in a low voice, “you promised to play nice with him.”

“If he’s not bleeding, then he’s fine.” she replied.

Harry would have said more, but just then Hedwig arrived for breakfast and had a reply for Harry from the school in Switzerland. “Hello Hedwig, I’ve missed you. Breakfast wasn’t the same while you’ve been gone.”

She hooted happily and nipped his finger as he gave her a piece of bacon.

Harry took the letter and began to read it. The school would accept Tommy for him; he had a place to go now. Harry knew he should be pleased, but wasn't sure how to feel. However, he didn't have time this morning to dwell on it; he had to get ready for the conference that morning.

As Harry stood to go back up and finish getting ready, Albus Dumbledore came into the kitchen.

"Good morning Albus." Harry said to his former Headmaster.

"Good morning, Harry, everyone." Albus replied and soon found young Tommy sitting at the table eating some scrambled eggs and said "Good morning to you also, Tommy."

"Good morning Uncle Albie."

"Good morning Professor, is you's needing anything to eat this morning?" Winky asked.

"Oh no thank you, the house elves at Hogwarts are trying their best to fatten me up every morning." Albus replied with a twinkle.

"I assume that you're here to collect me for this conference?" Harry asked.

"Heavens no, Harry, I merely wanted to be seen walking in with the most eligible bachelor in the wizarding world." Albus twinkled again as the room broke into laughter.

* * * * *

Later that morning Harry and Albus walked into the doors of the great conference hall with in the Ministry of Magic's offices. A few heads turned to see who had arrived, but most were still mingling and talking to one another.

"I'm afraid to tell you, but arriving with me has done little to increase your popularity." Harry said to his older companion with a smile.

"Just as well, I'm far too old for you anyway." They both laughed at the joke.

Minister Amelia Bones, soon found the pair and engaged them in conversation. "I'm so glad you have both arrived, I was beginning to think I was going to be outnumbered in this crowd."

"Outnumbered?" Harry asked, then with a wicked smile he continued, "What makes you think we're on your side?"

"Because I know that you are both dedicated to the well fare of children and to the education of them."

“There’s no use fighting her on this Harry, she’s very good at getting her way.” Albus said twinkling.

“Well, I suppose I do, but usually when it’s for the greater good. Let’s find our seats, shall we, so we can get started.”

A few moments later Harry found his seat, next to Professor Emil Yasinov, the deputy headmaster of the Maitland Magical School for Boys. They had only just introduced themselves to each other when Minister Bones, banged the gavel to begin the conference.

“Ladies and Gentlemen,” Minister Bones began, “before we begin, I want to thank you all for giving up your free time and attending this conference. It is a very important meeting concerning the education and welfare of our young witches and wizards.” Several people applauded her at this point, including Albus Dumbledore, who was seated to her right.

“One of the more important issues for this committee to decide upon is the consolidation of the smaller schools that exist around the country into larger institutions of learning. As was leaked to the press earlier this past spring,” at this point she shot a glance over at Percy Weasley, who was also in attendance, “there had been some discussion about closing the smaller and poorly maintained schools in favor of larger ones”

“Minister if I may be allowed to interrupt for a moment, but which schools are being considered for closure?” asked a witch Harry had never met before.

“The smallest of the bunch are being targeted first unfortunately, Rudella.” Amelia replied

“May I ask why this measure is even being considered at all?” Harry asked next.

“Yes, that is a good question.” offered Professor Ogden Pelham, who served on the board of governors of the Sirius Black Memorial Child Care Facility with Harry.

“Well, there is a theory that the examiners would be able to more efficiently test students, if they were in a more centralized location.” Once again Amelia shot Percy a dirty look that Harry caught.

“If that’s the reason behind the consolidation, then why not simply create a facility and have all the students taking their O.W.L.’s and N.E.W.T.’s come to this centralized location? It would be less expense in the long run and keep the students together, who wish to remain together.” suggested Professor Emaline Marwood, the ancient looking witch Harry had met last month at Honeychurch.

“That has been one of the ideas that we’ve come up with,” admitted Minister Bones, “but it wouldn’t be a savings in the long run.”

“What are the other theories that your community has developed? Knowing them may

help us decide how to proceed at this point.” Albus Dumbledore added to the conversation.

“Whose idea was this consolidation process to begin with?” Harry asked, having an inkling where it came from already.

“From an internal committee within the Department of Magical Education, Professor Potter.”

Harry looked and saw that Weatherby had responded to his inquiry rather quickly. Harry also saw that Madame Fineburch from the Office of Magical Education Introduction and Professor Marwood were both looking uncomfortable.

“I see; would this internal committee be comprised of anyone here today? I think we should be able to question those responsible for these decisions for clarification purposes.” Harry responded.

“The members of that committee wished to keep their identities a secret as it is not pertinent to this conference.” replied the cold voice of Madame Fenella Ramsden, the head of the Department of Magical Education.

“I think Professor Potter has raised a valid point, we should be able to question them to see what they have considered and not considered.” Professor Rudella St. James pointed out.

Madame Ramsden did not look happy as she gave an affectionate glance towards her junior, Weatherby, and responded coldly, “Professor St. James, I am more than capable of answering any questions you might or might not have in regards to that committee.”

At this point Harry began to remember a conversation he had with Weatherby in the school library of Honeychurch...

FLASHBACK

“Do you have someone special in your life?” Harry asked Weatherby.

“Yes”

“Are you in love with this person?”

“Yes, Harry I am.”

“Are you loved back?”

“I hope so.”

“Then that’s where you start with your mother, tell her you want her to meet who ever this person in your life is.”

“I don’t think my parents would approve.”

“Why?” asked Harry, not certain if he really wanted to go here or not.

“Just ... because, it’s not really any of your business anyway.”

“It’s not a guy is it?”

“NO!” Weatherby responded very offended. “It is a woman.”

“Then it’s your problem then, go and fix it yourself.” Harry said very annoyed and stormed out of the library.

END OF FLASHBACK

Harry shot a glance over to Amelia and to Albus Dumbledore, who were both taking in this conversation very carefully. Amelia returned Harry glance with a nod.

“Madame Ramsden,” Harry asked, “may I ask you a question?”

She sneered at Harry but replied, “As you wish Professor.” The way she said the word ‘Professor,’ Harry could tell she didn’t like him at all and was prepared to divert his attention to other topics rather than committee.

“Have you met Arthur and Molly Weasley yet?”

Both Madame Ramsden and Weatherby’s eyes grew large at the question, neither had expected it.

“Why would you ask such a thing?”

“Because, your junior here has been instructed to make nice with me by one of his superiors, of which I can conclude was not you. However, I informed him that in order to make peace with me, he had to first do it with his parents, as they have far more earned this act of respect than I have.” Harry explained, with the rest of the conference members looking at him oddly, except for the Minister of Magic. Amelia was wondering where he was going with this.

“What does that have to do with my meeting with Percy’s parents?”

“That’s simple,” Harry began, “it was the condition he had to meet in order to make nice with me once again. He had to introduce the woman who loved him to his mother.”

“What?” several of the panelists cried?

“Professor Potter, are you suggesting that one of the Department heads of this ministry is having an affair with one of her juniors?” Amelia Bones asked in mock outrage. Harry suspected she already knew the answer before she asked the question.

“I am suggesting nothing, I am merely speculating. Though it would explain a few things if it is true.”

“Well, Harry, once again you’ve given us something to think about. Perhaps, if I might be so bold as to suggest it, we might recess until tomorrow, in order to investigate this alleged affair.” Dumbledore suggested to the Minister of Magic.

“A fine idea Albus,” she said and continued, “Meeting adjourned for today, everyone you are free until tomorrow morning. Madame Ramsden, I would like to see you if I may.”

* * * * *

Later when Harry returned to Gimmauld Place in the early afternoon he found Tommy napping in his room. So he went to his room, changed his clothes and went to seek out Zinnia, he wanted to talk to her about the boy.

A few minutes Harry found her in the library reading a book. “Zinnia?” he asked gently so not to startle her.

“Professor Potter.” She greeted him as she looked up from her book, which she sat down on the table. “We didn’t expect you back so soon, Tommy will be pleased when he wakes up.”

Harry smiled and said, “I’m sure he will be. I wanted to talk to you about him.”

“Yes, sir.”

“I’ve received a reply this morning from a boarding school in Switzerland that is willing to take him in as a student. I was wondering what you might think about this decision.”

“It’s your decision of course, sir, nothing for me to say about it. I take it you need someone to escort him there. I know that you’ll need to be getting ready for you to go to school about the same time.” Zinnia inquired.

“That’s part of it, but I was wondering how you think he’ll take the news.”

“I’m not sure, but I suspect that he’ll want to stay with you. You’re the only one he listens to and you’re the one he ever wants to see. However, I’m sure that if you explained it to him, he would understand.”

Harry thought about it for a moment. “Well, we have some time to think about it, don’t we?”

“Yes, sir, you do.”

Harry was slightly stung by her words, but thought he probably deserved them. However, he was brought out of his reverie by a scream.

“HARRY!!”

Chapter Eight: The Conference Continues

Harry turned to run out of the room when he was tackled by a five year old boy, sending both to the floor.

“Harry, I had a bad dream.” Tommy cried

On instinct Harry picked the boy up and sat them both down on the chair was just sitting in and asked, “What was the dream about Tommy?”

“You’re not gonna send me away to some stupid old school are you?” the boy sobbed.

“Tommy, what are you talking about? What school?”

“In my dream, you were thinking of sending me far away to a school and you weren’t ever gonna come and get me or see me ever again.” Tommy sobbed more.

“Tommy, it was just a bad dream.” Harry said soothingly and began to rock the boy in his arms. However, Harry never denied it and Tommy knew it.

After Harry held Tommy for awhile he carried him back up stairs with Nanny Talmadge following. Harry went back down to let Dobby and Winky know about the dinner guests he was expecting that night and to allow Tommy to get cleaned up.

“Harry Potter, you’s is not sending little Master Tommy way, sir.” Dobby said to Harry. “He is needing you he is.”

Harry sighed, “What am I do with him when I go to school to teach Dobby? I have to work.”

“Dobby is taking care of him for Harry Potter.”

“Tommy needs to be around other children.”

“The school is full of children it is.”

Harry was beginning to fear he was losing this argument, but responded, “The students are older than he is, Tommy needs to be around children his own age.”

“Master Harry?” Winky interjected, “isn’t you saying that Master Tommy didn’t likes the other children and that he only likes you?”

“See Harry Potter?” Dobby said folding his arms over his small chest, “you’s is having to keep him for his own sake and you’s own good.”

“Winky?” Harry asked, “is there anyway I can win this argument with Dobby?”

“No Master Harry, I is thinking you’s not.”

“Damn.”

Later that night, after Ron and Hermione arrived to have dinner at Grimmauld Place, everyone was sitting to the table to eat.

“Where’s the demon spawn?” Ron asked.

“Ron.” Hermione said and smacked his arm.

“Ouch! What?”

Hermione shot daggers at him with her eyes and said, “Don’t call him that.”

“Tommy and Nanny Talmadge will be down in a few minutes’ guys.” Harry said while chuckling at their antics.

Tonks and Remus who were listening, also were laughing at Ron and Hermione.

“So when are you going to get married? You already act like it.” Tonks asked them.

Both Ron and Hermione shot her narrowed eyed looks, which made the others laugh.

Remus chuckled further, and asked, “So Harry how is the conference going?”

“Slow and boring, however, I did find out who Weatherby’s new girlfriend is.”

“Who?” Ron asked and then Harry told them about what happened that morning.

“Eww! She’s older than mum.” Ron exclaimed as Nanny Talmadge entered the room with Tommy, who took a seat next to Harry.

The next morning, Harry arrived at the conference hall at the ministry early. He wanted to get an early start to the day and he wanted to be there when everyone else arrived.

“Professor Potter, good to see you this morning,” said one of the panelists from yesterday.

“Good morning, um?”

“Rudella, Professor Rudella St. James.”

“Call me Harry then,” he said to her with a smile.

She smiled back at him as more panelists began to file into the conference room, including Minister Bones and Albus Dumbledore.

“Ah, Good morning Harry, I wondered where you got to this morning.” Albus said.

“Were you looking for me?” Harry asked.

“I thought I might try walking in with you again this morning to see if anyone would notice again. Alas, I fear it would have been the same outcome as yesterday,” chuckled Albus with his eyes twinkling.

Amelia laughed and went to her place at the podium and began to speak to the group, “Alright, can we get started please?”

“Minister Bones, I don’t believe everyone is here yet this morning.” Professor Ogden Pelham announced.

“Yes, Mr. Weasley will not be joining us for the remainder of the conference and Madame Ramsden is running a little late this morning, she’ll be here momentarily.” Amelia responded and was about to say something when she was interrupted again.

“Amelia, with Mr. Weatherby, I mean Weasley’s absence from this conference, can I assume that the goal has now changed? I know this was his pet project to merge magical schools together.” Harry asked innocently.

Several of the panelists were looking at Minister Bones expectantly.

“Actually, no, the focus has not changed, Professor Potter. We are still going to cover the procedure in which the individual schools are going to be evaluated; however, the actual merging and foreclosure will be put off until the evaluations are complete.”

“What an excellent idea.” Albus said and continued, “I, for one, would feel it my personal duty to make sure this evaluations took as long as possible; to make sure the entire school is properly gone over. In fact I think it should take an entire year per school for these evaluations to be completed.”

“I second that motion,” Professor Yasinov stated plainly.

“This project, you realize, will take several years to complete.” Amelia said to the group.

“Of course,” Madame Fineburch said, “We can’t rush into a rash decision like this, and we should have a thorough evaluation performed on each school, individually. Then once all the findings have been compiled then this panel should reconvene and study the matter further, at that time.”

“Well then are we all agreed?” Amelia asked and everyone raised their hands. Amelia quickly counted and said, “Any apposed?” and no one raised their hands and Amelia smiled proudly.

“One more thing we should discuss,” Harry said. “How large of a committee can we afford to send out to the schools?”

“Well, I know that the budget for the Department of Magical Education cannot afford a large staff to work on this project, it would have to be done by one or two people.

This of course, would make the evaluations take longer,” responded one the members of that department.

“Oh I think I have the perfect person for the job.” Amelia said. “Now let’s decide on how this evaluation should be performed.”

Late that evening, a very exhausted and over worked Harry returns home to Number 12, Grimmauld Place to find chaos reigning in the house.

“I’ve had it! I want him out of this house tonight!” Tonks bellowed.

“Tonks, be reasonable, you know I can’t do that. We’ll have to wait for Harry to come home.” Remus tried to be reasonable with her. Apparently she wasn’t listening.

“Reasonable?” Tonks asked incredulously, “Why should I be reasonable? I have done my best to play along with this farce, but I have reached my limits. He has to go!”

“What’s going on here?” Harry asked, afraid to truly find out.

Tonks turned to see Harry standing in the doorway of the parlor and said, “That ‘mini-me’ version of Voldemort has got to go! I will not stay in this house another minute with him.”

“Mini-me?” asked an impressed Harry, “Since when do you watch Muggle films?”

“I go over so often for hair ideas and don’t change the subject.”

“Alright, so what has Tommy done to incur the wrath of the terrible Tonks?” Harry asked wearily.

Remus answered for her, “Nothing as far as I can tell.”

“Harry, you said he would only be here for a couple of days, but it’s been longer than that now and its time for him to go back to that cottage you rented for them.” Tonks plainly stated.

Defeated Harry just exhaled and walked out of the room and went upstairs.

When Harry reached his room, he walked in, set down his satchel and began to change his clothes. He was tired and now he had to deal with Tonks’ ultimatum and get Tommy and Nanny Talmadge out of the house without hurting anyone’s feelings.

As Harry stood in front of his wardrobe he began to pull out his favorite Muggle clothes, a t-shirt and jeans, when the door to his room opened and in flew Tommy.

“Harry?” Tommy sobbed looking for Harry.

“Hey Tommy, what’s wrong?” Harry asked as he bent down to his knees.

Upon seeing Harry, Tommy began to cry uncontrollably and begged, “Please, please, please do-don’t send me to-to-to jail. I’ll be good, I promise.”

“Jail? No one is going to send you to jail, I promise.”

“That mean lady with the funny hair said I belonged in prison, I don’t wanna go to prison, I’ll be good. I won’t steal no more biscuits from Winky anymore I promise.” Tommy wailed.

Harry picked Tommy up and hugged him and said, “Don’t you worry, you’re not going to prison and you can have as many biscuits as you like.”

“Really?”

“Really!”

Then Tommy sniffed and buried his head into Harry neck. Against Harry’s better judgment, he was starting to care for this boy.

“Now Tommy, Vesta is coming back tomorrow morning and then we are going to go on our holiday together.” Harry said and Tommy sniffed. “You and Nanny are going to go back to the cottage I rented to live while we are gone, and if you’ve been a good boy, you can come back here with me while I go to my second conference.”

“How long will you be gone?” Tommy asked.

“A fortnight.”

Flustered Tommy asked, “How long is that?”

Harry smiled at the boy and said, “Two weeks.”

“Two weeks? That’s forever Harry,” the boy complained.

Later that night after everyone had calmed down and went to bed, Harry was lying in bed trying to read a book, but sleep had almost taken him and he was trying his best to finish the chapter before his eyes closed for good.

“Harry?” came a whisper from his door.

Looking over to the open door, Harry says, “Tommy? Aren’t you supposed to be in bed?”

“I can’t sleep; can I come in and stay with you until I get sleepy again?”

Harry smiled sleepily, “okay,” and Tommy scrambled up in bed with him.

Soon the boy was sound asleep with his head on Harry’s chest as he tried to finish his book. However, Harry put the book down, took off his glasses and watched Tommy for a moment before he too was fast asleep.

Harry had no idea how long he had slept before he and Tommy were awoken to...

“HARRY JAMES POTTER? What are you doing with that boy in bed with you?”

“Vesta?”

Chapter Nine: Harry's Holiday

“Yes, it’s me.” Vesta replied, with a wicked smile on her face.

“What are you doing here at this time of the night?” Harry asked

“I was going to surprise you, but you seemed to have surprised me instead.”

Tommy looked up at Harry and said, “I’m sorry Harry, I didn’t know I did anything wrong.” Then he bolted from the room back to his own.

“TOMMY?” Harry called after him, but he was already gone.

“Oh, Harry I’m sorry. I…” Vesta began feeling very bad for what she had done, but Harry took off after Tommy with Vesta hot on his heels.

Within moments Harry and Vesta emerged into Tommy’s room and found the boy laying face down on his bed. Harry started to go to him, but Vesta beat him to it and pulled the boy into her arms.

“I’m sorry Tommy, don’t cry. I was only trying to scare Harry. We pick on each other all the time, I didn’t mean to hurt your feelings,” she cooed into the boy’s ear.

“Really?” he asked, as Harry took a seat on the bed with them.

“Really, I didn’t mean to scare you to. Now why don’t we go back and you can settle back into the other bed. Okay?”

Harry nodded and took Tommy and carried him back to the other room and put the boy in bed.

Harry turned to her and was about to speak, when she started first, “I’m so sorry Harry, I didn’t want to hurt or scare him.”

“What changed your mind?”

Vesta smiled and said, “My mother reminded me of something. ‘A child is born sweetness and pure, it is the evil that man does what changes it’. He’s an innocent in all of this and I’m sorry I held it against him.”

“Me too,” Harry said, and then he kissed her.

The next morning Harry awoke to someone bouncing on the bed yelling, “Wake up Harry, wake up.” Harry mumbled something and tried to roll over and go back asleep when that bouncing something landed square in his chest.

“Ooooooph.”

Vesta laughed at him and said, “I think you’re not going to win, so you might as well get up.”

“Yeah,” Tommy agreed and began to jump again.

“Okay I’m up,” Harry said blearily and continued, “You have way too much energy this morning kid,” as he got up and walked into the bathroom.

When Harry came out after his shower, both Vesta and Tommy were missing from the bedroom. ‘Must have gone down to breakfast,’ Harry thought and moved to get dressed and join them.

On his way down to have breakfast Harry was stopped by Remus outside the library. “Good morning Harry, would you mind joining us in here this morning?”

“Alright,” Harry responded, not particularly liking the sound of this. Harry began to think, ‘Bet Tonks got him to side with her this morning, I’ll have to take Tommy out as soon as possible.’

When Harry entered the library, Tonks was standing by the fireplace with her head bent as if studying nonexistent flames in the grate.

“What can I do for you this morning?” Harry asked, curtly making Tonks flinch a bit.

Remus took a deep breath and plainly stated, “Nymphadora has something she wants to say to you this morning. Don’t you Tonks?”

Normally Tonks would have bitten anyone’s head off for using her first name, which she hated, but she let it slide this morning without a second glance. “Yeah, I do.” Tonks took a deep breath and quickly said, “I’m sorry for my tantrum.”

“Tonks!” Remus said, warningly, as Harry looked on bewildered.

“I said, ‘I’m sorry for my tantrum’.”

“Which one?” asked Harry, which earned him a glare from the Auror.

“Tonks,” urged Remus.

With a deep sigh, she continued, “Tommy and Nanny Talmadge can stay and I promise that I won’t threaten to throw him into Azkaban again.”

“Why were you mad at him to begin with?”

“He’s supposed to be evil incarnate and... and...” Tonks began, but found finishing difficult.

“It’s alright Tonks, just say it.” Remus urged her again.

“He just seems like a little boy and I’m starting to like him,” she finished in a very little voice.

Harry thought he was hearing things for a moment. “You like him? You’ve terrorized him since he came into this house and now you say you like him?”

Tonks looked sheepish and went back to watching the empty grate once more.

A short time later Harry was sitting at the table having his breakfast and leaned over and asked a question.

“So are you ready to go to your holiday cottage?”

“No,” Tommy pouted, “I don’t understand why I can’t go with you.”

“I told you, you and Nanny Talmadge will be at the cottage I rented for you while Vesta and I are off in our holiday cottage. We’ll be back in a fortnight and then you can come back to stay here.” Harry explained.

Tommy took a quick glance at Tonks and said, “She doesn’t like me and wants to put me in jail.”

“We had a long talk this morning.” Harry said and turned to the colorful woman and said, “Didn’t we Tonks?”

She shrugged and Remus kicked her under the table.

“Yes, Harry we did and anyone you want to bring into the house is welcome.” Tonks said to the boy.

Tommy just stared at her as Harry laughed.

“But Harry,” Tommy whined, “I don’t wanna go to that other house, I wanna stay with you.”

Harry looked sympathetically at the boy and said, “I know you do, but we’ve been through this and it’s only for a few days.”

Nanny Talmadge and the elves had already gone over to the house to get it ready for them to stay in, while Harry was to bring Tommy over after they had time to get settled into the house.

“How are we gonna get there?” Tommy asked Harry.

“I’m going to apparate us both over in a minute. You’ll like apparition, it’s fun. Well at least for guys anyway.”

Tommy looked at Harry oddly, but allowed himself to be picked up and with a load

crack; they were gone, only to reappear moments later in the back yard of the cottage somewhere in Wales.

Harry looked at Tommy to see his reaction to apparition and he had a strange look on his face.

“Tommy, what’s wrong?”

“I feel funny down there,” he replied and pointed to his pants.

Harry laughed and carried him into the kitchen.

Later Harry returned to Grimmauld Place and created a portkey for him and Vesta to use to get to this secluded cottage hide-a-way. He then collected his beautiful girlfriend and together, with their luggage, activated it, sending them across the English countryside and they landed in the middle of the coziest sitting room either had ever seen.

“Harry, this place is amazing, where did you find it?”

Harry laughed and said, “Believe it or not, in my Gringott’s Vault.”

Vesta threw him a confused look, but said nothing, knowing he would tell her soon enough.

“When I was going through the paper work and deeds of my properties about a year and half ago, the deed to this place fell out of a pile of other papers. When I examined it closely, I discovered this cottage and the land surrounding it had once belonged to my grandparents. In fact this was their honeymoon cottage.” Harry explained and continued, “I had never had the opportunity to come out here before, but after you and I got together, I knew that there was no other person in the world I wanted to share this with.”

Vesta’s whole body softened at his words and she felt so warm and loved at that moment. Seeing this Harry walked over to her and slid his arms around her waist and pulled her in for a long passionate kiss.

“Does this mean you approve of the cottage?” he asked.

Deep inside, her stomach was doing flip flops, but on the outside she simply said, “I guess it’ll do.”

After lunch, Harry and Vesta went for a walk on the grounds surrounding the cottage, as neither had been there before; they made an adventure of it. Even though there was no one for miles around, they wore Muggle clothing, just in case, as there were more of them to be found in this area of England than wizards and witches.

When the pair returned to the cottage a couple of hours later, Harry was about to open the door when he turned to look at Vesta. She had stopped at the garden gate to smell the rose that grew there. She was so beautiful standing there in the garden that just

had to go to her and picked her up in his arms. Harry carried her into the cottage and to the bedroom, where he placed her on the bed and claimed her mouth with his.

“Hmmm, what was that for?” she asked, as he released her mouth.

“Because you are so beautiful,” he said, never looking away from her eyes.

She laughed in just the way that he found to be the most adorable and she said, “I am so glad we’ve come on holiday together.”

“So am I,” he replied, before once again devouring her in kisses.

Three hours later Harry woke up to witness his beloved Vesta exiting their bedroom as she slipped her robes on over her creamy white shoulders, probably on her way to the kitchen to make dinner for the two of them.

‘Ah,’ Harry thought, ‘life does not get any better than this.’ Then he pulled himself out of bed and made his way into the bathroom to take a quick shower.

As he stood under the stream of water Harry remembered a conversation that took place just before the left Honeychurch, at the end of the school year.

FLASHBACK

“What are you going to be doing together?” Fitzzy asked.

This time it was Harry who answered her, “I thought we might rent a small cottage off in the forest together so we can be alone, so I can walk around naked so she can look at my back side.”

Fitzzy was impressed, it took him all year, but he finally said something that she wasn’t expecting and slightly shocked her. Of course, she wasn’t going to let him get away with it.

“Oh, you’ve got to let me visit and see that.”

“Alright, but I’m charging admission.” Vesta replied.

Harry almost spit up his pumpkin juice.

END OF FLASHBACK

Drying off he stood in front of the mirror and thought to himself, ‘What would she do if I did that?’ Harry examined himself in the mirror and he stood naked in front of it, the way all men do, but refuse to admit to.

“Yeah,” he said to the mirror, “let’s try it and see what she says.”

Harry finished drying himself off and he was brushing his wayward mop of hair when he heard Vesta call to him. “Harry, are you out of the shower yet?”

“Yeah, honey, I’ll be out in a moment.” Harry replied and began to walk into the sitting room.

“I have a surprise for... you...” Vesta said as she noticed a very naked Harry walk into the room.

“Merlin, help me, he’s huge!”

Harry’s eyes almost popped out of his head and thanks to his lightning fast Quidditch reflexes he grabbed a throw pillow from the couch and covered himself while Vesta was almost bent over from laughing so hard.

Harry then sputtered, “Fitzy? Wha, What are you doing here?”

“Getting an eyeful that’s for sure!”

Chapter Ten: Fitzy Makes Three

“This is not funny Vesta,” Harry said as he backed up into the bedroom with the cushion still covering himself as best as he could.

Vesta howled with laughter and Fitzy attempted to follow Harry saying, “Come now, you can’t be that shy, can you? I mean it’s just little ole me.”

“Fitzy, you’re not funny,” Harry said, as she giggled and attempted to pull his only covering away.

In between the laughter Vesta said, “Oh Harry... you’ve... nothing... to be... ashamed... of.”

“I’m not ashamed; I just don’t feel the need to play show and tell with the entire staff of Honeychurch,” Harry exclaimed as he once again avoided losing his small cushion that Fitzy was trying to get away from him with her wand and well placed summoning charm.

Finally Fitzy’s charm worked and the cushion went flying out of Harry’s hands and she thought he was trapped, but he out smarted her and transformed into Shadow.

Fitzy stamped her foot in the carpet and said, “That’s not fair Harry, you transform back this instant.”

However, the black panther merely walked back into the bedroom and nudged the door shut with his head, leaving a very amused potions mistress and slightly annoyed charms teacher in the sitting room.

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An hour later, Fitzy and Vesta were standing at the bedroom door, “Harry would you

please come out? We were only teasing you.”

“No.”

Vesta and Fitzzy held back their chuckles as best they could as Fitzzy replied to Harry, “You’re acting like a woman, you know that right?”

“I don’t care. I’m not coming out again,” said Harry which caused the two women to burst out laughing.

Harry, who was becoming irritated, said, “You know this is not funny at all.”

“Yes it is,” chorused the two outside the bedroom door.

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Later on, as the three were sitting down to dinner, after Harry finally did emerge from the bedroom, Fitzzy began asking about the conference Harry had recently attended.

“So you’re sure that the school isn’t closing?” Fitzzy asked excitedly for the third time.

“Yes, Fitzzy, there are no schools closing anytime soon. The other panelists and myself have commissioned a study to be performed that will evaluate each school to see if it doesn’t meet the standards of academic achievement.” Harry replied to her once again.

“Well Edwina will be very happy; she and the other teachers were worried about it,” Vesta said.

“Especially since her favorite hero saved her school for her,” teased Fitzzy while giving Harry a sly look.

With his fork half in his mouth; Harry managed a “Huh?”

Vesta smiled knowingly and Fitzzy claimed a prize for embarrassing Harry once more tonight and said, “You mean that you didn’t know Harry?”

“Know what?”

“Edwina thinks very highly of you,” Vesta said, trying to get her boyfriend to not become hopelessly paranoid before going to bed.

“I guess, all I did was bring Quidditch back to Honeychurch,” said Harry with a shrug.

Fitzzy started to argue with him, but Vesta stopped her with a look. Now was not the time to sing his praises and she knew it, so the three moved on to other topics of conversation.

Fitzzy sighs and begins again, “I hear from Vesta that you might be bringing something else new to school his term.”

Harry looks at her confused and asked, "What?"

"You don't have to be coy with me Harry, Vesta said you might have a little boy to bring with you. I am so happy that you and Vesta are going to have a baby."

Harry turned to Vesta with emerald eyes as big as dinner plates and asked, "Are we, Vesta? Are we having a baby?"

Fitzy looked apologetic to his best friend and said, "Oops, sorry Vesta, I thought by the way you were talking that Harry knew about this."

Vesta looked at her apologetic best friend and her boyfriend who was teetering in between happiness and nervousness and said, "No, I am not having a baby. Harry is the one with little boy. He took on in from the orphanage that he runs. I swear Fitzy, if you ever listened to anything I said, I would be amazed."

Harry looked back to his plate of food and wasn't sure whether to be relieved or disappointed, but quickly recovered and said, "Oh, you meant Tommy. No, I'm sending him to a boarding school in Switzerland at the end of summer. He'll be educated there until he reaches eleven and then he can go to school in England if he wishes it."

"Really?" Vesta asked, "I thought you hadn't decided what to do with him yet."

Harry shrugged and said, "Sorry, but I came up with it before our holiday started."

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Later that night, after Fitzy went home, Harry and Vesta were settling into bed. Harry lay back against the pillows and Vesta cuddled up into him and placed her head on this bare chest and began to stroke it soothingly.

"Harry," Vesta asked, "are you sure you want to send Tommy away?"

"I thought you were against me keeping him beyond the summer. In fact I think everyone is against me doing anything for him period," replied Harry.

"It's not that I'm against it anymore. I thought about it and I think you should keep him."

Harry began to snuggle into her as well and asked, "What do you I owe this revelation to?"

"Dobby is right about the boy, he needs you."

"Oh you think so do you?" Harry asked huskily.

Vesta knew that voice very well and said, "That's right I do." Then she skid her hand down his chest and stomach and under the covers of the bed until she found what she was looking for.

“Ooof!” cried Harry when she made contact with her target.

Vesta giggled and asked, “Harry, love, did you bring your wand to bed with you, or are exceptionally happy to see me.”

Harry chuckled and tried to keep his voice deep instead of the high pitched reaction to how she had a hold of him and replied, “Keep holding it like that you might snap that wand in half, then we’ll both be unhappy.”

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For the remainder of their stay at the cottage, Harry and Vesta had a very enjoyable time together, though Harry was quick to make sure that there were no unexpected visitors before he ventured out of their bedroom naked again, however, he didn’t let it stop him.

It wasn’t until he received an owl from Hermione, that his summer plans changed.

Dear Harry,

Sorry to bother you on holiday, but I have terrible news. The conference that I had asked you to attend has been cancelled. I just can’t believe it, I know how much you were looking forward to being a panelist, but it couldn’t be helped.

It seems that someone either misplaced all the registered attendees or something has happened, but when we went to confirm the reservation, we had an insufficient number to continue with our plans.

I hope you can find something to do with your time this summer.

With much love,

Hermione

“Honey,” Harry said to Vesta, “Hermione’s letter says the conference was cancelled. Do you know what that means?”

“House elves have to continue in servitude and lack of wages?”

“When did she put you under the Imperius Curse?” Harry asked blandly as Vesta giggled at him. “It means that we can spend the rest of our summer here and run around naked all day long.”

“Fitzzy will love that.”

“Who said she’s invited?” Then Harry bent down and kissed her forehead.

Vesta smiled at the affection and said, “Well, she and I are going on holiday together. We’ve had it planned since before you and I started seeing each other romantically.”

Harry fell into the chair next to hers and said, "I don't suppose I can talk you out of it, could I?"

"Nope," replied Vesta off handedly.

"Nope?" Did you just say 'nope?' That's very Muggle of you."

"I know I've been friends with Fitzy for too long."

Harry laughed and said, "I need to see Aunt Petunia anyway. I was just hoping you'd like to come along."

"Take Tommy with you."

Harry thought about it for a moment, "I don't think that would be fair."

Vesta was stricken for a moment, "Oh Harry, I forgot. Voldemort killed her sister; of course, she wouldn't want to meet him. It would too much for her."

Harry looked at her like she was mental and said, "I meant it wouldn't be fair to Tommy."

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A few days later Harry and Vesta returned to Grimmauld Place, before she was to leave and meet Fitzy for their holiday trip. However, upon entering the house Harry was surprised to find Tommy and Nanny Talmadge were already there.

"Harry!" screamed the little boy. "I've missed you!"

"Hey Tommy," Harry replied and picked him up. "What are you doing here?"

"Uncle Albie brought us here."

Harry looked over at Vesta, who quickly put her coat and hat back on and said, "Well, I've really have to go meet Fitzy." Then she kissed him on the cheek and grabbed her bags and apparated away.

"Uncle Albie huh? Is he still here by chance?" Harry asked.

"No," Tommy giggled, "he's been gone for days and days."

"Who's been taking care of you?"

"Nanny Zinnia."

"Who else?"

"Dobby and Winky. I like them, are they married?"

“Kinda. Elves don’t exactly get married like humans do,” Harry explained. “But for what they do, they would be married, I guess.”

“That’s good, cause she says she’s got a rolling pin with Fiddy’s name on it. Who’s Fiddy?”

“Fiddy is a girl elf who likes Dobby and won’t take ‘no’ for an answer,” laughed Harry, who was truly beginning to realize just how much he missed the boy. “Where are Remus and Tonks?”

“I don’t know, I think they went to work, wherever that is.”

“Hmmm,” Harry said, “Whatever shall we do for the rest of the summer before school starts?”

“I don’t know. You have a meeting or something ain’t ya?”

“Not anymore, it’s been cancelled.” Both Harry and Tommy smiled at that one. “However, I did promise to visit my Aunt Petunia this summer. Wanna come along?”

Tommy thought about it as Harry carried him through the house and into the kitchen’s to get something to eat, “Does she like kids?”

“Sometimes.”

“Alright, but only on the days she likes them.”

Harry grinned and said, “Okay.”

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About a week later, after writing to his aunt, Harry and Tommy show up at Number 4, Privet Drive and ring the door bell. Much to Harry’s shock, Dudley answered the door.

“Oh, it’s you,” he sneered at Harry and looked at Tommy oddly. “Don’t tell me you’ve bred, who’d want a freak like you?”

Harry smirked, “Nice to see you also Duddy-kins. Still fat I see.”

Dudley started to advance on Harry, which would have been a mistake as large as he was, but foretunately he was stopped just in time.

“Duddy-kins? Who’s at the door?”

“Just Harry and some kid, mum,” replied Dudley and then he walked back into the kitchen.

Aunt Petunia appeared in the door and said, “Oh Harry, how nice to see you again. Did you bring that nice lady of yours along with you?”

“No Aunt Petunia, I brought someone else instead. Aunt Petunia, meet Tommy. Tommy this is my Aunt Petunia.”

“Hello ma’am,” Tommy said and then hid behind Harry’s leg.

“Where did you get such a lovely boy Harry?” Petunia asked sweetly.

“Well, you see...” Harry began, but Tommy finished for him.

“He got stuck with me when everyone wanted to put me in jail.”

Chapter Eleven: Petunia

Harry groaned and clapped his hand over his face. ‘Does Will Beagle have a remote control over this kid’s mouth?’ Harry drew his hand away and to his astonishment, Aunt Petunia was chuckling.

“That’s not quite the way it happened, Tommy,” Harry said and then introduced the two to each other.

Aunt Petunia actually smiled and said, “Why don’t you come into the lounge, I have some freshly baked biscuits. Would you like some biscuits Tommy?”

The boy nodded his head and ran into the lounge with Harry and Aunt Petunia following. Unfortunately no one got to eat any of the biscuits as Dudley was sitting there eating the last of them from the plate.

“Duddy-kins!” Aunt Petunia screeched. “Those were for my guests.”

“What guests?” Dudley asked, “It’s just that freak and his brat.”

Harry instantly became angry. It was one thing to call him a freak, but it was another to call Tommy a brat. ‘Where did that come from?’ Harry thought a moment later.

“Dudley, I invited Harry and his girlfriend over, so that makes them my guests,” Aunt Petunia said not her ‘I’m not happy voice.’

Dudley laughed, “You mean that little boy is you’re girlfriend Harry? Figures, you always were a freak, but I never took you for a child molester.” Then Dudley’s fat face broke into a sort of sneer that Harry had seen on Aunt Marge’s face far too many times for his liking.

Tommy instantly ducked back behind Harry, who drew out his wand at the insult. “Maybe it was time for those piggy ears that Hagrid advised me to give you years ago,” threatened Harry which made Dudley pale and grab his bum.

“Boys! Stop fighting this instant!” Aunt Petunia bellowed. She then explained, “I’ve already met Harry’s girlfriend, he brought her by to meet me last Easter, unlike you

who never comes by to visit. She was unable to come this time and Harry brought his..." Aunt Petunia stopped, unsure what to call Tommy. "What is he to you Harry?"

Thinking about it for a moment, he said, "My legal ward."

"Well, yes, Harry brought Tommy with him to meet me. Where is your girlfriend?"

Now Dudley was in the hot seat, "Ah, sh... she couldn't make it either. She has to work."

This argument went on between Dudley and his mother for a few more minutes, while Tommy pulled on Harry's trouser leg and asked, "Harry? What's a ward?"

Harry bent down to look Tommy in the eye and explained, "A ward is a boy, like yourself, who lives with someone who takes care of them, but isn't a blood relative."

"So does that mean I belong to you?" Tommy asked.

Harry thought about it and said, "I guess so."

Tommy then jumped into Harry's arms giving him a hug and excitedly said, "Good."

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After the disastrous episode with the biscuits in the lounge, Aunt Petunia makes lunch for her guests. Harry decides to help out; after all he's done it a million times before. Dudley was in the lounge watching television and Tommy was sitting at the kitchen table watching Harry and Aunt Petunia fixing lunch.

"Harry?" Tommy asked, "Why aren't the house elves making lunch for us?"

"House elves?" Aunt Petunia asked, "What are house elves?"

Harry smiled and answered, "House elves are small creatures who work in the wizarding world as house keepers or personal servants." Then he turned to Tommy and answered, "House elves only work for wizard families and Aunt Petunia is a Muggle. So here we do things the Muggle way, so why don't you make yourself useful and take those plates and set the table."

Tommy looked at Harry oddly for a moment, not sure to believe him or not about his Aunt Petunia not having house elves, but jumped up and began to put the plates around the table.

Aunt Petunia smirked, "He does whatever you say doesn't he?"

"Not always, bath time is usually a battle. One to get him into the bath and then another one to get him out of it again."

She chuckled again remembering her little Duddy-kins at that age and said, "I think all boys are like that at his age." Then she thought about it, "How old is he anyway?"

Before Harry could answer, Tommy replied, "I'll be six on September the first."

Harry thought for a moment, 'He'll have to spend his birthday traveling to Switzerland, poor kid.' But he shook himself from it and went back to fixing lunch.

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As they ate lunch, Dudley, who was sitting in Vernon's place at the table, was looking at Harry suspiciously. "So freak, where is this girlfriend of yours?"

"She went on holiday with a friend of ours from school, they had these plans since last year and Vesta didn't want to break them, so I came with Tommy instead," Harry explained again and then turned to his fat cousin and asked, "Where's your girlfriend?"

"I already told you, she's at work. Unlike you, us hardworking normal people have to work."

Harry smirked, "Oh, I work, though I don't have to as I'm rich. I teach at the school where I met Vesta."

Dudley paled at the word 'rich,' but continued, "So you teach at the freaky school you went to as a kid huh? No one else would have you huh?"

"Actually I work at a different school for 'freaks' and I had tons of job offers before I took that job. Most of them paid more in a week than you'd make in a year."

Aunt Petunia and Tommy were both watching this exchange like an audience at a tennis match, going back and forth between the two men, wondering who was going to make the winning point.

"What is it that you teach at the school for freaks? Needlepoint?" Dudley chuckled at his own bad joke.

"Defense Against the Dark Arts is my main topic, but I also teach the first years how to fly on broomsticks. You remember all about Defense Against the Dark Arts don't you Dudley? It would be the kind of spells that repelled the Dementors back when we were fifteen," said Harry as he took a bite of his roast beef sandwich.

Dudley blanched at the mention of the Dememtoids and sputtered, "Yeah I remember them. I remember how you couldn't kill them."

Harry smiled, "I can do that now."

"You can?" Aunt Petunia asked, "He always told her that they can't be destroyed. I heard him myself."

"Normally My dad would be correct, they are not easy to destroy, but I managed it three times. The first time scared the hell out of me," Harry admitted and with chuckle continued, "I think I even wet myself in the process."

Tommy laughed at the idea of Harry peeing in his pants, but had no idea of what a Dementor even was.

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After lunch was over and Harry had cleaned up for his aunt, he and Tommy were ready to leave and return home by way of Mrs. Figg's house.

"Now Harry, you and Tommy don't have to leave so soon," his aunt said.

"I know Aunt Petunia, but we have a lot of things to do at home, but I'll try to come back around later this summer."

"I'll come too," Tommy chimed in.

She laughed and said, "Well, you'd be welcome." Then she looked into Harry's eyes and said, "You'd both always be welcome to come by."

Harry kissed his aunt on her boney cheek and with Tommy, left the house and was on their way down to Wisteria Walk and to Mrs. Figg's fireplace to floo home.

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After the pair returned to Grimmauld Place, Harry sent Tommy up to his room to play, while he started to make plans about a project he wanted to have done soon.

"Dobby?" Harry called.

A small pop came from behind him and Harry turned to see the house elf standing there. "Is Harry Potter needing his Dobby sir?"

Harry smiled and said, "Yes I am, Dobby. Did you know that Tommy's birthday is September the first?"

"No, I is not knowing that Harry Potter. Is because it isn't his birthday."

Harry became confused, "Tommy told me today that was his birthday."

"Oh no Harry Potter, that is the day that Professor Dumbledore is giving him to Madame Odrian to be raising like her own."

"Oh, I see," Harry said, "So when his birthday really?"

"I is not knowing when You-Know-Who's birthday is, but the day of the final battle is being the day you's did what you's did to him. It was taking him three whole days before he was turning into a baby after you's did you did," explained Dobby.

Suddenly Harry had the recollection of hearing a baby crying in the hospital wing when he was recovering from that battle. He had completely forgotten it until now.

“Harry Potter?” Dobby asked, bringing Harry back to reality.

“Hmmm? Oh yes, what I wanted to ask you Dobby, is if you persuade the others to not have a birthday party for me this year and have one for Tommy instead.”

Dobby looked at Harry oddly and said stammered, “Ah, yes, well...”

“Are they in the kitchen waiting for me now?”

“No’s Harry Potter, you’s birthday is not coming until next week.”

“Good, but I still want to have something nice for him to remember. Can you arrange that?” Harry asked.

“Oh yes, Harry Potter, I’s is doing that for you,” Dobby said eagerly and popped away.

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The next few days went along splendidly for Harry; no one in the house was fighting with one another. Vesta was scheduled to return from her holiday with Fitzzy just in time for his birthday dinner that night, which was not going to be a surprise party this year, thanks to Dobby.

Harry was lying in bed sleeping in bed when suddenly he was awoken by a rambunctious five year old tackling him and screaming, “Happy birthday,” in his ear.

“Oooof,” was the only sound Harry was capable at that moment, which caused Tommy to giggle.

“Come on get up Harry, you promised to take me to Diagon Alley today.”

Harry smirked and once he was sure he still maintained bladder control from where Tommy pounced on him, he said, “It’s my birthday, shouldn’t you be taking me there instead?”

“No, I’m an award remember and you have to take me,” Tommy answered quickly.

“Alright, let me get a shower and after breakfast, we’ll go.”

“Yay!” Tommy yelled and scampered back to his own room as Harry managed to haul himself out of bed and make his way to the bathroom.

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Sometime later as Harry and Tommy emerged from the fireplace at the Leaky Cauldron, they caught the eye of old Tom in the innkeeper.

“Mr. Potter, what do you have there? A little one from your facility?”

Harry chuckled and said, “No, not his one, I went for a stroll one day and he followed

me home and hasn't left yet."

Tommy spun around and gave Harry a look that said, 'that's not funny.'

Harry laughed again, "Tom, this is Tommy, my new ward, Tommy this is Tom. He's run the Leaky Cauldron and took care of me once when I was younger."

Old Tom grinned and bent down and shook his lad's hand, which made Tommy become bashful and try to hide behind Harry's leg once again. Old Tom chuckled and said, "Well, Tommy, me boy, would you care for some breakfast this morning?"

Tommy shook his head 'no' and Harry told him, "No thanks, sir, we just had some, didn't we Tommy?"

Smiling Old Tom said, "Well, in that case I'll leave you to it then. I trust you know the way out back?"

Before Harry could say anything, an elderly witch who was sitting in the room yelled, "I know you!" which caused Harry, Tommy and Old Tom to jump.

"Well of course you do, this is Harry Potter woman," Old Tom said back to her.

"Not him," said the old witch. "I meant him," she said as she pointed to Tommy. "You're Tom Riddle. You're You-Know-Who!"

The pub fell silent as everyone turned their eyes to Harry and Tommy.

Chapter Twelve: Chaos in Diagon Alley

Old Tom took breath and said, “Don’t be preposterous woman, You-Know-Who died years ago and even if he wasn’t dead, do you honestly think Harry Potter of all people would be parading him around like this? I mean really, this young lad is only a boy, not a full grown dark wizard.”

Harry breathed a sigh of relief and looked down at Tommy. The boy was still hiding behind Harry’s leg and clutching at the fabric of his trousers. Then Harry looks at the elderly witch and asks, “What makes you think this is Voldemort?”

Everyone in the pub flinched except for Harry and Tommy. Harry because he refused to do so and Tommy because he didn’t know he was suppose to.

“Because everyone knew about the abomination that Tinsia Odran had up in her house, and it’s standing right there,” said the witch as she pointed at the boy.

“Abomination?” Old Tom asks, “What abomination would that be?”

“Everyone knows that Harry Potter defeated He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named that day up at Hogwarts, but what isn’t known is that he was turned into a baby and has been raised by Tinsia until she died a few weeks ago. Now that little abomination is being raised by Harry Potter,” exclaimed the old witch.

“Aunt Tinsy loved me,” whispered Tommy so low that almost no one heard him, except for Harry.

Harry was getting mad at this point, mostly because he had business in Diagon Alley and was being held up and mostly because it was none of this old woman’s business what he did. He took a good hard look at the elderly witch and through gritted teeth Harry said, “It seems to me, Madame, that my affairs are none of your concern. If I choose to take in a young boy to raise is my business and no one else’s. Unless, of course, you think that my private life has something to do with you?”

The old witch started to retort something scathing from the look on her face when someone in the back of the pub said, “It’s not good to piss off Potter.” She then closed her mouth and with a look of venom on her face turned back to where she had come from.

Harry looked around the pub and asked, “Anyone else want to make any accusations today?”

The room remained silent.

Harry turned to the pub keeper, leaned in and said, “Sorry about all this Tom, but I think Tommy and I need to get to our shopping today,” and patted the older man on shoulder.

“Not a problem Mr. Potter, never a problem,” old Tom chuckled as he escorted them

to the back of his establishment and saw them safely through the brick wall that held the concealed entrance to Diagon Alley.

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Though Tommy had been to Diagon Alley before, it was a completely different thing to be going there with Harry Potter as your escort. Everyone in alley was friendly to them, unlike the witch in the pub, and all the storekeepers knew Harry by name. Tommy was completely in awe and completely forgotten the experience at the pub.

“Harry?” Tommy asked as Harry took him by the hand.

“Yes, what is it?” Harry replied.

“How does everyone know you?”

“Well, I did something when I was a baby that impressed everyone and then I did it again right before I graduated from Hogwarts.”

“What did you do?” Tommy asked innocently.

“I defeated the darkest wizard in over a century,” replied Harry awkwardly.

“As a baby?”

Harry smiled and said, “Yes, I did it as a baby the first time.”

“Wow, you must be a strongest wizard alive,” said Tommy in complete awe of Harry, as if seeing him for the first time.

“Well, I think I was more lucky than anything.”

Tommy thought about it for a moment and said, “In that case, you shouldn’t be famous.”

Harry’s smile cracked into outright laughter.

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After Harry and Tommy had concluded their small transaction at Gringott’s Bank, they began to window shop in the alley.

“Why did we have to go in there Harry?”

“Well, I needed to fill up our money pouches so we could do our shopping.”

Tommy thought about it and did like the trip on the carts into the depths of the bank vaults, but was confused by why Harry had a private word with one of the goblins.

“Harry, why were you talking to that goblin right before we left?”

“I asked Gardoth to do something for me. It wasn’t anything important, at least not yet,” Harry said smiling.

“Oh,” came the reply. Then Tommy saw something he really wanted to look at in the window of the shop across the way and dragged Harry to it.

“Look Harry! Look!” Tommy exclaimed. In the window of Quality Quidditch Supply was a brand new racing broom.

“So you like flying?” Harry asked.

“Yeah, it would be brilliant to fly.”

“And play Quidditch too I bet,” Harry asked slyly.

“Nah, I’d be terrible at Quidditch.”

“What makes you say so?”

Tommy sighed, “I’m too little.” Then he pulled away from the window and started to look in other shops.

Harry smiled after the boy and had an idea.

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Soon the two entered the Magical Menagerie and was looking at the different pets in the store.

“Harry can I have an owl?” asked Tommy as he spied all the beautiful owls in their cages in the store. Some where large and some where small, but Tommy thought they are all brilliant. He watched them all hoot and ruffle their feathers and he had the largest smile plastered on his face.

“When you go off to school, I’ll get you one then,” Harry replied and Tommy smile faltered.

Then the lad went to look around some more as Harry approached the counter to ask the old witch behind the counter for some owl treats for Hedwig and Grady.

“Mr. Potter, how nice to see you again,” the shop keeper said.

“Harry,” he replied as he always did to the shopkeepers in the alley, “Just call me Harry. I was interested in getting some owl treats today.”

She looked confused for a moment and asked, “Is the display empty again?” To which Harry nodded his head ‘yes.’

“I’ll be right back; I’ll nip some from the back.”

As she went into the backroom, Harry looked over and saw Tommy looking at the snakes in their cages. 'No,' Harry thought, 'he's not looking at them, he's talking to them.'

As Harry walked over to them and bent down to join in the conversation using parseltongue. "Hello there," Harry hissed and asked "How are you today?"

The snakes actually looked shocked. It was rare to find one human who spoke snake language, but two in one day, that was never heard of before.

Tommy giggled when he heard Harry hiss in his ear, but understood every word of it.

"Harry, this snake says it doesn't have a name."

"Usually snakes don't, unless a wizard gives them one."

"Oh. Can I name one?" Tommy asked.

"Only if you buy one," Harry said.

However, before they could continue the witch came back carrying a box of owl treats. "Are you talking to my snakes again? Every time you come in they expect me to talk to them like you do."

Harry smirked and said, "I'm sorry about that."

Tommy was confused and asked, "Can't you talk to snakes?"

She smiled and said, "Heavens no, only dark wizards can do that."

Tommy pouted and said, "Harry ain't a dark wizard!"

The shopkeeper looked up from the display she was refilling and said, "Of course, he isn't a dark wizard, he goes around defeating them for us." Then she pulled Tommy closer and said, "But he's got one hell of a temper."

Tommy grinned, "Yeah, I know."

"Hey," Harry said in mock offense causing the other two to laugh.

Standing back up the witch puts a couple of bags of owl treats on the table and asks, "Anything else for you today?"

"Can we get a snake Harry?" Tommy asked.

"Uh," Harry said as several snakes began to hiss at him asking to be taken home with them and Tommy looked at him with very large eyes. The shopkeeper watched very closely to see if the lad could break Harry's resolve to never buy a snake.

Against Harry's better judgment, he eventually gave in and allowed Tommy to talk him into the purchase of a small corn snake and all the supplies that go with one, much the shopkeeper's pleasure.

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Thirty minutes later, Harry took Tommy into Flourish and Botts Bookstore to find a volume of magical pet names for the snake when Harry saw Xander Malfoy in one of the rows.

"Xander? Is that you?" Harry asked.

"Professor Potter, how are you today," the boy replied, very happy to see his favorite teacher.

"Have they sent out the booklists already?"

Xander laughed and said, "No, I'm hiding from Draco and Blaise. Ever since they got together, they act so bizarre anymore. It was bad enough when he was mooning over you, but now..." Xander then made a face and said, "bleck!"

Harry started laughing, though he tried not to. He remembered how they were acting last spring when they left Honeychurch after they had bonded. Then again 'bleck' pretty much summed up Harry's opinion of them as well.

"Now that Draco is pregnant, I'm hoping Will and his mother will invite me to stay with them for the rest of the summer, so I can avoid the whole scene."

Harry stopped laughing and stared at one of his favorite seekers. "Draco is pregnant? Is that possible?"

Xander sighed unhappily, "Yeah, for Veela and part Veela it is. I hope I never fall in love."

"Xander, falling in love is a good thing," Harry started to say to him, but just at that moment, Tommy came running up with the book he had selected.

"I found the one I want Harry," Tommy began when he spotted Xander. "Hi."

"Hello," Xander said back wondering who this boy was.

"Tommy, this is one of my pupils, Xander Malfoy. Xander, this is my new ward, Tommy Riddle," said Harry as he introduced the two boys, who shook hands after they were introduced.

"Professor, is Tommy going to be living with you at school when it starts again?"

"Ah, we haven't decided that as yet," Harry said, "Tommy hasn't decided if he wants to keep me yet." Then Harry smiled and the two boys laughed.

“Xander, where are you?” asked a voice.

“Oh hell, they found me,” Xander complained and hung his head in defeat.

“Xander? Oh there you are...Potter!” drawled Draco Malfoy as he came around the shelves of books.

“Malfoy,” Harry replied in a pleasant voice.

Malfoy smirked and was about to say something venomous when he spotted Tommy standing beside Harry. Malfoy then wrapped his arms around his stomach and began to back away without ever taking his eyes off of Tommy.

“Something wrong Malfoy?” Harry asked innocently.

“Nothing Potter,” Malfoy said, “Come along Xander, we must be going.”

“See you in September Xander,” Harry called out to his pupil as the two Malfoys left the store.

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After they made their purchases, Harry and Tommy were on their way back to the Leaky Cauldron.

“Come on Tommy, we need to get back to Grimmauld Place for my surprise birthday party.”

Tommy stood there confused looking at Harry, “I thought you said Dobby promised to not have one this year?”

“He did,” Harry said cheerily, “but if I know my friends they are all waiting for us there anyway.”

“Okay.”

Then Harry picked Tommy up and held him with one arm and all of their purchased in the other when they reached the apparition point near the Leaky Cauldron.

“Ready to go home?”

“Yeah, I like that feeling.”

Chapter Thirteen: Taking A Trip On A Train

Harry and Tommy had returned from Diagon Alley that day and knowing full well that there was a surprise party waiting for him; Harry had sent Tommy into the kitchen to tell everyone they had returned. Harry had also instructed Tommy to tell them to not yell surprise because he already knew all about it.

Harry listened at the door to the kitchen and smiled when he heard Mrs. Weasley say, "What do you mean he knows all about the party?"

Falling against the door in a fit of laughter, he fell into the kitchen with everyone looking at him like he was mental. Then they all started laughing at him as well. It had ended up being a very nice evening for them all.

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About a month after Harry's birthday party, the residents of Grimmauld Place were getting ready for another school year. It had been an exciting month for Harry and Tommy. Harry and Vesta had done everything they could think of with Tommy, even taking him to a Muggle amusement park.

However, this morning found Harry in bed sleeping along side his lovely lady when Dobby popped into the room and said, "Harry Potter, Harry Potter, you's is getting up now."

Harry muttered something in his sleep and tried to roll over but since Vesta was laying on top of him, he didn't do very well and simply fell back to sleep.

"Harry Potter, you's is making Dobby promise to be getting you up this morning and you's is getting up."

Again Harry muttered sleepily and did nothing.

Dobby sighed and said, "Harry Potter, this is you's last warning before I's is taking drastic steps."

Harry didn't stir, but this time Vesta woke up. "Good morning Dobby," she said sleepily and started to get out of bed.

"Good morning missy," Dobby said to her and then turned his attention back to Harry, shook his head and said, "You's is leaving Dobby no choice." Then the elf snapped his fingers and placed an instant freezing charm on Harry's boxers.

Needless to say, Harry woke up this time. He sat upright almost immediately and grabbed his boxers in a vain attempt to warm himself. Dobby popped away as Vesta fell on the floor laughing at him.

"This is not funny Vesta," Harry said as he began to rip his underwear off as fast as possible.

“Yes it is.”

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After Harry had dressed and had a very warm shower, he arrived in the library to kept decorate for Tommy’s early birthday party. Since his birthday would be on September the first, they would all be far away from Grimmauld Place, Harry and Vesta would have returned to Honeychurch and Tommy and Nanny Talmadge would be arriving at De Zauberei Akademie of Switzerland. (That would be the Magical Academy of Switzerland)

“Do you think he’ll like his party?” Harry asked worriedly.

“Yes, he will Harry,” Vesta answered him. “Who did you invite anyway?”

“Well, he doesn’t have any friends his own age, so I invited us, Remus and Tonks, Hermione and Ron, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley, Professor Dumbledore, Fred and George, the elves and Nanny Talmadge. I invited Ginny also, but she’s really busy getting the kids ready for schools right now, so I don’t expect her to show up.”

Vesta stopped what she was doing and looked at Harry, “You invited Ron and Tonks both? I thought they didn’t like Tommy.”

“Tonks promised me she would behave and actually she has been nicer to him lately and Hermione told me that she would work on Ron. So I figure with both her and his mother here, he would either behave or get the dickens smacked out of him,” explained Harry with a smile.

Vesta got an amused look on her face as she remembered the Weasley matriarch in action. However, she changed the subject knowing would begin to worry that no one would appear at the party. “Harry, you said Ginny had to get the kids ready for school. How many of them have you persuaded to come to Honeychurch?”

“All of them until Albus showed up at the Facility earlier this summer, now I’m down to just over half of them. He seemed to think it was funny that he was able to steal them away like that.”

“So our first year class this year is going to be a large group isn’t it?” Vesta asked thinking about how she was going to handle that many eleven years old at once.

“We had classes that large when we were in Hogwarts, we can handle it,” Harry said excitedly.

She looked at him and said, “Harry, you’ve never taught a group that large before.”

“Yes, I have. Last year I had the all the sixth and seventh years in one class together and when I was Head Boy at Hogwarts I taught the first and second years Defense classes. They were all large groups,” Harry said matter-of-factly.

“You taught when you were Head Boy?” Vesta asked, very impressed with him.

“Uh huh, Dumbledore had hired a vampire named Denholm Thorgood to teach that year and the Board of Governors wouldn’t let him near the younger children. Which was too bad, he was one of the best teachers I ever had,” Harry said and then remembered sadly out loud, “And a good friend as well.”

She heard the note of sadness in his voice and wondered what had happened to the vampire to make Harry miss him so much. However, she was afraid of what the answer might be and there was no need to make him even sadder on what would hopefully be a happy day.

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Some time later, after most of the guests had arrived; Nanny Talmadge went upstairs and woke young Tommy up. Groggily the boy slipped down the stairs and started to make his way in the kitchens for breakfast. However, he was redirected into the library by his nanny without even realizing it.

Upon opening the sliding doors to the library Tommy was shocked by a resounding, “SURPRISE!”

Even the little corn snake, that had crawled up through Tommy’s hair, hissed at the surprise. Tommy had named the snake Maize after he read the book about the care of snakes Harry had bought him. He couldn’t think of a better name and snakes don’t generally have names anyway.

“Happy birthday Tommy,” Harry said as he went over and picked him up and took him over a large stack of presents on the library table.

“It’s not my birthday yet,” Tommy said as he grabbed the first wrapped gift.

Dumbledore chuckled, “That’s true enough, however everyone will be at their different schools that day and we wanted you to have this party. You don’t mind do you?”

“No,” Tommy giggled, “I don’t mind, Uncle Albie.” Then Tommy attacked the first gift with gusto, which happens to be from Remus Lupin. Remus had given Tommy a picture book about magical creatures, which Tommy thought was brilliant. “Thank you Remus.”

The werewolf smiled and said, “You’re welcome Tommy.”

Tommy opened several more gifts which all turned out to be books, but it was when he opened a long thin box that he was truly stunned. “A broom! I got a broom!” yelled an excited six year old. “Thank you Harry, thank you!”

Hermione looked over at him and said, “You got him a broom?”

“It’s a Cleansweep Junior, it doesn’t go that fast or very high off the ground,” said

Harry. "Every kid needs a broom at least once in their life."

Before anyone could say anything else, Tommy was on the broom flying around the room.

"Weeeeeeeee!"

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Later in the afternoon, after the party was over with and Tommy finally changed out of his pajamas, they were all sitting down to have lunch, before they left for King's Cross Station.

"Have you gotten everything packed for the trip?" Harry asked Tommy.

"I think so, haven't I Nanny?"

"Yes, dear, I think everything is packed except for your birthday presents and your pet," Zinnia replied.

"Maize can ride in my hair, she likes that," Tommy said.

"I don't think the train conductors will Tommy," Harry said sagely.

Tommy grinned and said, "Who's going to tell them?"

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Sometime later as they stood on the platform at Kings Cross Station Tommy asked, "Harry, where are your trunks?"

"Oh, they're back at the house with Dobby, waiting on me to return to go to Honeychurch."

Tommy pouted for a moment, "Didn't you want to ride on the train with me to your school?"

"I would have liked to, but you aren't going to Honeychurch with me, your going to your own school. It's in Switzerland and Nanny Talmadge and Maize will be there with you," explained Harry.

Tears began to form in his eyes and Tommy asked, "Don't you want to be with me anymore? Did I do something to make you not like me?"

"Of course not Tommy, I like you just the same as I always have. You just need to go to school and be with children your own age."

Tommy's young face soon began to flow with silent tears, "You work at a school, why can't I go to school with you? I wouldn't be much trouble, I promise I wouldn't."

“I work at a school for bigger kids; you’d have no one to play with there, no one to learn with. At the school in Switzerland, you’d have all kinds of boys and girls your age to make friends with and to get into trouble with. You’ll be so busy; you won’t even have time to think about me,” described Harry with as much enthusiasm as he could muster.

“I don’t want them, I want you,” Tommy said as he launched himself at Harry and buried his face into Harry’s neck and began to sob openly.

“Tommy,” Harry said gently, “it’ll be alright.”

“No it won’t, you’ll forget all about me. Please don’t make me go away, Please!” wailed Tommy. “I’ll be good I promise, you can even have my presents back and I won’t ask for anything again. Please don’t throw me away.” Then Tommy fell into fits of hic coughing and crying all at once.

For a moment Harry’s thoughts traveled back in time to another conversation.

FLASHBACK

“How dare you boy!” bellowed the fat face of one Vernon Dursley.

“Please, Uncle Vernon, I’ll be good. I didn’t mean to do bad, I promise,” begged a five year old Harry Potter.

“You little freak, how dare you do that to Dudley!” he bellowed at the boy and then slapped him across the face, knocking his glasses off.

“Please don’t throw me in there, its dark in there,” begged Harry as his uncle pushed him into the cupboard under the stairs.

“You’ll stay in there until I decide to start feeding you again,” he said and slammed the little door shut and locked it.

For two days Harry sat in that little cupboard, they wouldn’t let him out once, not to eat, not to drink, not to go to the bathroom. When they finally opened the door again, his Aunt Petunia slapped him in the face for dirtying himself. He cried for an hour from the pain of the slap, but he never once made a sound.

END OF FLASHBACK

Harry had remembered something he never wanted to remember and he didn’t like what he felt. However, he is still Harry Potter and Harry Potter was always the hero.

Harry wrapped his arms around the boy’s trembling body, kissed him on the forehead and whispered in his ear, “I’m so sorry, please forgive me.” Then he turned to Zinnia Talmadge and said, “Get the luggage we’re going home.”

“What about Switzerland?” she asked.

“Switzerland can go bugger off!”

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Upon entering the front door of Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place, Harry marched straight up to Tommy’s bedroom to put the boy to bed for a much needed nap. However, he was stopped along the way by his two best friends, who were still there waiting to see Harry again before he left for school that night.

“Harry, what happened?” Hermione asked, “Is Tommy sick?”

“No Hermione, just a change of plans.”

“What change of plans?” Ron asked suspiciously.

“He’s coming with me to Honeychurch,” Harry said plainly.

“I knew it! That kid has you under some kind of mind boggling spell,” Ron accused as Vesta and Tonks came out of the library to see what the commotion was about.

“Ron,” Harry said distinctly, “The only thing in this world that has ever boggled my mind has been Vesta’s breasts and since Tommy has no control over those, I highly doubt that I am under his control.”

Hermione giggled and Harry returned to his trek up the stairs to put Tommy to bed.

Vesta, however, turned to Tonks, placed her hands on her breasts and said, “They are something aren’t they?”

Tonks fell on the floor laughing.

Chapter Fourteen: The Return to Honeychurch

A few minutes later Harry came back down from Tommy's room where he left the boy sleeping on his bed after he had cried all the way out of the train station.

"I think he'll stay asleep for a while now," Harry said as he entered the sitting room where everyone else had congregated, including Mr. and Mrs. Weasley.

"Hello Harry dear," Mrs. Weasley said as she kissed him on the cheek.

"Hello, I thought you both left already, I didn't know you were still here," Harry said.

Hermione huffed and said, "Oh they did leave Harry, Ron called them to come back so he could gang up on you about Tommy. Because he knows I won't help him."

Harry sighed and said, "Ron, we've had this discussion. Tommy is not boggling my mind at all. No one is."

"Except for Vesta's breasts," Tonks said out of the blue, which caused almost everyone to chuckle.

"Harry, do you realize that if you do this, you're going to be joined at the hip with the man that murdered your parents? You don't have to do this, you deserve to be free of that damned prophesy!" Ron yelled at his best friend with concern in his eyes.

"Ron, I understand what I am doing, truly I do. I think my parents would approve of this, at least I hope they would."

"But why can't he go to that school in Switzerland? Why do you have to take care of him? Why do you have to take him to school with you? Won't he be fine in the other school?" Ron asked.

Hermione sighed and said, "Because Harry is the only thing that Tommy loves, he wants to be with Harry. If Harry was to send him away then maybe something would happen like last time and turns into Voldemort again."

Nearly everyone flinched at the sound of the dark wizard's name.

"I think Hermione is right," Remus said, "Tommy needs to be with Harry, if nothing else to learn how to love."

"Harry! For the love of Merlin! When does this end? Put him in Azkaban and be done with him, like you should have done to begin with," Ron bellowed once again.

"No Ron, I can't do that. I cannot put any child in Azkaban," Harry retorted.
"Remember in our sixth year when Fudge tried to have me put in Azkaban? Remember how scared I was then when I thought he was going to get it done?"

Ron nodded his head not wanting to remember that time of their lives.

“Could you do that to anyone after remembering that time in our lives?” Harry asked, almost pleading with his best friend.

Ron looked away and thought about it but then remembering all the times when Harry woke up screaming when he was forced to see the things in Voldemort’s mind and having to tell those horrors over and over again. Then he remembered all the pain Harry went through because of the dark wizard, watching Cedric and Sirius die, enduring the cruciatus curse and much worse.

“Yes, Harry, I could do it.”

Vesta stood up and went to Harry’s side when he said, “I can’t Ron and I more importantly, I will not.”

Ron was about to say something and from the look of his red face, it wasn’t going to be pleasant. However, he never got the chance to say it.

“RONALD BILIUS WEASLEY! How dare you speak to Harry like that!” shouted an equally red faced Mrs. Weasley. “We’ve all suffered from that dreaded dark wizard, but he’s gone now and thanks to Harry he has a chance to become a decent human being and not what he once was! It’s thanks to Harry we all have a chance to live happy lives.”

“He should be free because of it mum, not saddled with ... him,” Ron said as he pointed up the stairs to where Tommy was (hopefully) sleeping.

“Fine!” she bellowed again and grabbed her son’s wand. “Here you go, here is your wand. Now go upstairs and kill that little boy.” Then she shoved him out of the door towards the stairs.

“Mum, are you crazy?” Ron asked, not believing what he was hearing.

“No, I’m not crazy; I’m just trying to make you understand what it is your asking Harry to do.”

Ron stopped and looked up the stairs and then back to his best mate. Perhaps he understood, perhaps he just couldn’t stand the thought of being a murderer of a small child, but Ron Weasley didn’t say anything. He just walked down the flight of stairs and out of the front door.

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Early the next morning, Harry came down to breakfast with Vesta to find Remus eating with Tonks, Nanny Talmadge and an overly excited Tommy Riddle playing with Dobby all over the kitchen.

“Good morning everyone,” Harry said to them with a yawn.

“Morning Harry,” Remus replied with a smile. “How are you feeling this morning?”

“He’s mentally drained this morning,” Vesta replied before Harry could utter a word.

Tonks perked up and asked, “Why’s that Vesta?”

“I’ve boggled his mind with my breasts again,” Vesta said as she reached for a croissant causing Harry to blush, Remus and Nanny Talmadge to laugh and Tonks to spit her coffee across the table.

Then everyone heard Tommy ask, “What does that mean? You keep saying it and I don’t understand it.”

They all looked over at the confused boy and the house elf that had both his hands covering his mouth trying not to laugh with tears leaking from both eyes.

“Ah, well, that is to say,” Harry sputtered not knowing how to answer that question, which caused everyone to laugh even harder at him. However, Remus came to Harry’s rescue.

“You see Tommy when a man and a woman love each other like Harry and Vesta does, she can sometimes cause him to be distracted with her feminine beauty. In this case Harry likes to look at Vesta’s ... well he likes to...touch her chest.”

“Why?” Tommy asked innocently.

“Yeah Harry why?” Tonks asked with fake puppy dog eyes.

Harry threw her a dirty look and went back to Tommy and said, “Tommy, I won’t lie to you.” Tommy nodded in response and waited for Harry to continue. “I like it when Vesta sleeps with her head on my chest so she can feel my heart beating as I sleep and I like to put my hand on her chest so that I can feel her heart beating.”

Tommy frowned and said, “You two are weird,” and went back to play with Dobby, who was rolling on the floor in silent laughter.

Harry then said, “Thanks for the support Dobby.”

“You’s is very welcome Harry Potter.”

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Later in the afternoon, after Vesta had went ahead and apparated to the school and Dobby also went ahead with everyone’s luggage, Harry was sitting in the library waiting for Nanny Talmadge and Tommy to find him.

“There you are, we thought you left without us,” Tommy said when he found Harry.

“No, I wouldn’t go off and leave you behind,” Harry said with a smile. “But we are going to be leaving shortly, are you ready?”

“Yes, sir, we are,” Nanny Talmadge said.

“Zinnia, I’ve told you before, you can call me Harry.”

She smiled as Tommy asked, “How are we getting there? Not the train again?”

“Trains are all bad, you know? However, this time we are going by portkey.”

Nanny’s eyebrows rose in surprise and Tommy asked, “What’s a portkey?”

“A portkey is a magical traveling devise. It can be anything at all, usually something that Muggles think is just a piece of junk. After it’s created it takes as many people as needed to wherever it’s been designed to take them, which in this case is Honeychurch Station,” explained Harry.

“Can I watch you make one Harry?” Tommy asked excitedly.

Harry smiled and said, “Alright, why don’t you find me something to turn into a portkey.”

“Okay,” Tommy said as he ran out of the room to find something.

“Sir?” Nanny asked him, “Aren’t the making of portkeys under strict Ministry control?”

Harry thought about it for a moment and said, “Probably, but they won’t mind me doing it this once.”

She frowned as Tommy returned with an old dust broom that Winky used to clean the scullery with.

Harry smiled and took the small broom and laid it on the table and took out his wand and cast the spell, “Portus.” The broom glowed for a moment and then went back to normal.

“Everyone ready?” asked Harry. Then all three touched it and a few moments later they all felt the pull from behind their navels as they portkey activated and deposited them at the Honeychurch Station, near the cobblestone way.

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As Harry, Tommy and Nanny Talmadge came into the clearing at the end of the cobblestone way, they were able to see the school grounds for the very first time. Harry chuckled to himself as he watched Tommy and Nanny Talmadge. The looks on their faces as they found the ruins of bombed out building surrounded by a crumbling wall that had barely survived World War II and the 50 some odd years of neglect in between was absolutely priceless.

“Harry?” Tommy asked.

“Yes, Tommy is something wrong?” Harry inquired innocently.

Tommy pointed to the crumbling ruins and asked, “Is that where we’re going to live?”

“Yes it is Tommy, don’t you like it?”

Both Tommy and Nanny Talmadge looked like they wanted to laugh in his face, which made Harry want to laugh all the more.

Harry then bent down and said, “You see that old bell with the rope hanging from it over there by that old rusted out gate?”

Tommy nodded his head.

“Good, now I want you to go over there and ring the bell for me. Can you do that?”

Again Tommy nodded his head and ran over to the rope and pulled it several times. Suddenly a shower of gold and silver sparks flew everywhere covering the ruins, the wall and the group where they stood and with a great blinding light the ruins melted away as wave after wave of magic flew back like a pair curtains on an overly greased rod revealing one of the most wondrous sights Tommy had ever seen in his young life. There before them was a pair of the largest golden gates that any of them had ever seen. They seemed to just sparkle invitingly in the sun light.

“Well, Tommy, what do you think of the old school now?” Harry asked with a laugh.

“I’ll let you know when I can see again. Right now, all I can see are a bunch of dark spots everywhere I look,” said the boy with a slight pout.

Harry laughed again and picked the slightly blinded boy up and hoisted him up onto the back of his neck and proceeded inside with Nanny Talmadge at his side. Once inside the gates, they were in the outer court yard of a small roundish castle with five towers. It was an impressive little castle, and it was the place that was Harry’s home away from home.

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Once inside they were greeted by Edwina Klump, the Headmistress of the school.

“Edwina,” Harry greeted her happily, “How have you been this summer?”

“Wonderful, Harry simply wonderful,” the plump woman said cheerfully. “I see we have a new guess this year. Who might you be young man?”

“My name is Tommy and I’m an award.”

“I see. Did Harry win you in a contest?” she asked with amusement.

“Sort of, but I don’t think it was a game he wanted to play,” Tommy replied in a pleasant manner.

“Don’t be silly Tommy; I’m sure Harry was playing to win.”

“Edwina, I was wondering if Vesta or Dobby told you about my needing an extra room added to my quarters this year?” asked Harry. “We’ll also need one for Nanny Talmadge here as well.”

“Yes, yes, it’s all been worked out. Tommy’s room was added to yours and Nanny Talmadge’s private quarters will be next to yours. I have also set aside an unused classroom for Tommy to go to school in while he is with us,” the Headmistress explained happily.

“Well, you’ve thought of everything haven’t you?” Nanny asked politely.

“Well, it’s the least I can do for the man who saved our school from being closed.”

Chapter Fifteen: The New Year Begins

“You saved the school Harry?” Tommy asked.

“Oh,” Harry said dismissively, “I didn’t really save anything; I just sort of smoothed over a little knot.”

Tommy snorted as six year old boys do and said, “Yeah, right.”

Harry smiled as he led the boy with the snake in his hair and Nanny Talmadge up the stairs to the staff tower to help them get settled into their new quarters. Down the corridor from Harry’s quarters was a door with a newly created plaque on that said, ‘Zinnia Talmadge.’

“These are your rooms Nanny,” Tommy said reading the plaque.

Nanny Talmadge smiled indulgently and answered, “I think your right. Now I think I’ll get settled in and leave you two to do the same.” Then she opened her door and went in to her new sitting room leaving Harry and Tommy alone in the corridor.

Moments later, Harry and Tommy were standing in front of his door and Harry bent down and whispered to his ward, “Now our door has a password on it. It won’t open unless you give the password, so you had better learn it.” Harry finished with a smile. Then Harry stood back up and gave the password, “Dog Star.”

Tommy frowned and said, “That’s a funny password. Does it ever change?”

“Ever so often I change it, just to annoy Vesta,” Harry said with a grin. Once inside Harry’s sitting room, he saw that a new door had been added to it, just to the right of the portrait of Sirius Black, Harry’s godfather. Giving the portrait a wink, he brought Tommy to it and said, “Tommy, this is the portrait of my godfather, Sirius Black. Sirius this is my new ward, Tommy Riddle.” Then Harry eyed the portrait worriedly.

“Nice to meet you sir,” Tommy said to the painting.

Sirius looked at the boy, smirked and said, “Well, Harry’s been gone for so long that I thought maybe you were his son.”

Tommy giggled and said “I wish I were.” Which caused both Harry’s and Sirius’ eyebrows shot straight up.

Sirius, however, recovered first. “So you want to be a Potter? Hmmm, they are a rowdy lot you know? Harry’s father was my best friend in the whole world and he and I got into loads of trouble when we were in school together. Harry here did his fair share of trouble making also, so do you think that you’re up to the task?”

“I think so,” Tommy said with a grin.

“Sirius, please try to not put those ideas into his head. You’ll warp his mind,” Harry said laughing, trying to change the subject from being Tommy’s parent.

Sirius laughed and continued, “That’s an odd name you have there, I hope people have been nice to you about it. There was once another Tom Riddle who wasn’t a very nice person.”

“I heard,” Tommy said in a small voice and tried to hide behind Harry’s leg, which was usual when he felt afraid about something.

Sirius looked confused and Harry mouthed, ‘I’ll tell you later.’ The animagus nodded knowingly and suggested that they check out Tommy’s room as he couldn’t. There were no paintings in the room for him to walk into.

“Well, Tommy, what do you think?” Harry asked.

“Wow, it’s just like my room back home!” Tommy exclaimed as he saw all his things had been brought there by Dobby. In fact Dobby had recreated Tommy’s room from Grimmauld Place as best he could to make the boy feel better about the move. “Look, there’s a warming stone for Maize to curl up on and take a nap,” Tommy added excitedly and took the snake out of his hair and placed it on the stone.

“So Tommy, do you think you’ll like it here?” Harry asked with a smile.

“I guess I could live with it.”

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After Harry gets Tommy settled into his new room and had given Nanny the password to his quarters, he went down to the Headmistress’ office to have a meeting with her about the incoming students from the Sirius Black Memorial Child Care Facility. He had told her that all of the eleven year olds from the school would be coming to Honeychurch last spring; however, Dumbledore had persuaded a few to actually come to Hogwarts.

‘I can’t believe that old codger telling them stories about me to lure them away,’ Harry thought to himself as he made his way down the stairs. ‘Still half of them are

coming here and I should warn Edwina about it.'

Upon entering the office Harry said, "Edwina, I wanted to ... have ... a ... word ...with ... you." Harry had drawn out the sentence when he found that Edwina was already in a meeting with Angus Evanston, the incredibly ancient deputy headmaster of the school and a young witch with long dark hair who happened to have the fullest reddest lips and the most stunning eyes that Harry had ever seen. Harry also noticed that the witch looked to be about the same age as he was. "Sorry, didn't know you were busy," Harry apologized and started to leave.

"No, no, Harry," Edwina said to him, "Come in, come in, we were almost finished. In fact we were just talking about you."

Harry looked at her suspiciously, "You were?"

"Yes, I was telling Tepthilda here that you were the youngest teacher at Honeychurch," Edwina explained as she offered Harry a seat.

"I didn't know we needed a new teacher," Harry said. "Did something happen to one of the others or are you finally coming to your senses and sacking me?"

Everyone in the room laughed at his joke. "No Harry, we wouldn't sack you," Edwina smiled at him, "We would just murder you in your sleep and bury the bones up in that hidden room you found last year."

"As long as I'm not fired," he replied with a genuine smile.

"Edwina?" wheezed the elderly Angus Evanston. "Perhaps introductions are in order? We do have a new member of staff who hasn't met any of the others as yet."

"Oh dear, where ever are my manners?" Edwina said as she realized she had been rude. "Harry Potter, I would like you to meet our new Arithmany teacher, Prof. Tepthilda Konkle. Tepthilda, this is Harry Potter, our resident teacher of Defense Against the Dark Arts and flying instructor. Not to mention the Quidditch coach and savior of the school."

Harry blushed at the last bit as Professor Evanston looked sternly at the Headmistress, who ignored the look entirely.

Tepthilda smiled at Harry as she shook his hand and said, "Yes, the Headmistress was just telling me all about how you came up every week the summer before last to repair the Quidditch pitch to get it back into shape again."

Harry stood there stunned for a moment her voice was so silky that it reminded him of Mauricio Guenzel, the Spanish vampire that had come last year to lecture to his third years. Mauricio always had a way that made Harry feel like he was standing naked in the middle of the pitch with everyone staring at him. This young witch didn't have that ability, but it still reminded Harry of it.

"Well, it wasn't much really. Just a little hard work and I had the spare time," Harry

said with a smile. However, Harry just realized that Edwina said Tepthilda would be teaching Arithmancy, that was Professor Evanston's subject. "Angus, are you giving up teaching?"

The deputy headmaster sat there looking rather old; in fact he looked like he had aged quite a bit over the summer. "Alas, I think I shall retire at the end of this year, Potter. As much as I have enjoyed teaching here, I think it's time for me to move on and let someone young have the position now."

"What are we going to do for a deputy now? You were perfect for the job," Harry respectfully said the elder wizard.

"You see?" Edwina asked, "I told you that the other teachers respected you and would not want you to go."

"Perhaps, you'll stay on professor," Tepthilda said to him. "With me here as your assistant this year, you won't have to read so many essays or grade as much and you might feel like staying on a bit."

"My dear, you are young and need to have the position all for your self, not sharing it with a dodgy old man," Evanston said quietly. "Besides, you were first in your class in the subject when you graduated from the Dasherwood College of Higher Magical Principles last spring. You are more than capable of doing the job." With that said, he gave no more room for argument on the subject.

Harry took his cue from the elder wizard and said, "Yes, um, actually, I wanted to talk to you about the children who will be attending school from the Sirius Black Facility. Ginny owed me a list of students who were coming here and I thought you might want to talk about it."

Edwina rolled her eyes at the mention of the new year of students coming in tomorrow. "Actually, I do want to talk to you about that as well. In fact Celeste and Tepthilda should probably be in that conversation as it is their new sponsored class."

Harry turned to the young witch, "So you get to be a sponsor also, you're going to have a lot of fun."

"Actually, that would be your fault that they are sharing that responsibility," Edwina said as he looked at her confused.

"You mean because of my kids that are coming in?" he asked. Harry had always thought of them all of his kids, even though he didn't work at the facility. If any of them had ever needed something, he had made sure they had received it.

"Ah, no actually, that's not the reason actually," said Edwina in a stammer that got a small chuckle from Angus.

"What she's not telling you Potter, is that this year when we sent out acceptance letters, she added a list of the teachers to them. When the children of wizarding families saw your name on the list we had more replies than we usually did,"

explained the deputy Headmaster.

Harry smiled and shook his head, "That's not my fault then is it?"

"Perhaps, we should invite Celeste to come and join us in this conversation," Edwina added.

"I'll get her," Angus said, "I know where she is and then I have a few things to do before dinner tonight." With that the elderly man got up from his chair and started for the door.

"Thank you Angus."

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About an hour after Professor Evanston left them, Professor Celeste Morgan came into the office looking a little harassed.

"Hello everyone," she said cheerily. "Sorry it took me so long, but Angus just now found me."

"That's quite alright Celeste," Edwina said with a smile to the astronomy teacher. "We were just here gossiping about the students behind their backs."

"Well, after the new incoming class gets here, we're going to have too many students to even keep track off, let alone gossip about them," Celeste said as she took a seat.

"How many incoming firsties are we having this year?" asked Harry.

"Twelve," Celeste replied coolly, "You know I was too nice to you last year when I traded classes with you. I think you should have to deal with twelve eleven years olds."

Edwina and Tepthilda tittered and giggled at Harry as he sat there with his mouth hanging open.

Realizing she was having him on, Harry responded, "Well, I would trade back with you, but I don't think it would be fair to my class. They would be heartbroken if I left them now."

Celeste smirked at him, "You've been here too long, you're starting to sound like Fitzzy." Everyone laughed.

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Later in the afternoon Harry found Tommy and Nanny Talmadge in his sitting room and decided to take them on a tour of the school, to help them become acquainted with it much easier.

"How did your meeting go?" Tommy asked Harry.

Harry smiled at them both, "Oh it was such fun," which caused Tommy to laugh. "Now I had an idea that maybe you two might like to have a tour of the castle so that you don't get lost."

Nanny Talmadge thought it was a fine idea. "That is an excellent an idea. Come along Tommy; let's get your shoes back on again."

After Tommy scrambled up and got into his shoes a few minutes later, they set out on a tour of the castle. Harry first showed them the staff tower and where all the teachers lived, though they couldn't enter their quarters as they all had password protected entrances.

Moving through the castle, they quickly found the unused classroom that Edwina had told them about. Harry opened the door to the classroom and said, "After my meeting was over, Edwina told me that this is the classroom that you're going to be using for your primary education."

Tommy made a face about having to go to school as most boys do at that age causing them to laugh.

"It'll be okay Tommy," Harry said with a chuckle. "You have to go to school; I will not be responsible of depriving you of a good education. That way when you're older I can teach you magic."

Tommy stopped from looking at the room and said, "You're going to teach me magic?"

"If you go to school here or if I'm still teaching that is," Harry said with a shrug leaving a smiling Tommy standing there as he moved into the next room.

"Now this is your office Zinnia. It would have been the instructor's office for this classroom, but this way you can have a private place to grade Tommy's work and send it off by owl post to the Hogsmeade School of Elementary Magic to be recorded for the official record." Harry looked at her and continued, "Sorry about the extra work for you, but I think you expected this."

Nanny Talmadge smiled him and nodded, "Yes, I did and I do not mind."

Harry smiled as Tommy frowned, "What's the matter, Tommy? You like reading, almost as much as Hermione does. Besides if you're a good lad and do well with your marks, you can come to my flying classes out on the pitch with the first years."

Tommy beamed up at him. "You mean it?" he boy asked as Harry nodded.

"Where will you be if we should need you sir?" Nanny asked.

"Harry, I've told you before call me Harry," he said before replying. "My classroom and office are below this one on the next level down. So if you need me during my classes, that where you can find me."

After leaving Tommy's classroom, Harry and the other found an old friend of his. Harry smiled at the sight of her and looking towards the floor he said, "Hello, how was your summer this year?"

"Hi Harry," said a little giggling voice. "It's been really boring here, with no one to play with. At least the children are coming back tomorrow." Then she looked at Tommy and asked, "Who are you?"

"I'm Tommy Riddle, I'm an award. Who are you?"

"Chloe Honeychurch and I'm dead."

"You win," Tommy said and they both giggled. Tommy had just made his first friend at Honeychurch.

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That night as dinner approached, Harry and Vesta led Tommy and Nanny Talmadge down to the dining hall. Upon entering the hall they found most of the teachers already seated at the staff table waiting on them.

"Good evening everyone," Harry called out to them getting their attention. "I hope we haven't kept everyone waiting for too long."

"Oh no Harry, we're just sitting here waiting for you for hours and hours starving to death, but no it wasn't too long a wait at all," said Fitzy sarcastically with the corners of her mouth threatening to curl up into a smile.

"As long as it wasn't a long wait," he said and directed his guests to their seats.

Fitzy switched her attention to Tommy and said, "So you must be the Tommy that I've heard so much about this summer. You know Harry talked about you non stop when I saw him over a month ago."

That got Tommy's attention, "He did?" and then looked at Harry to see if she was telling the truth as he took a seat next to the gruff Professor Botolf Proctor, who gave the boy an approving look.

However, it was Vesta who answered for him, "Yes, he did. He wanted to bring you with us on our holiday, but he couldn't."

Just then Madame Klump and Professor Konkle came into the dining room and took their seats while most of the other teachers were surprised by the addition of a new teacher to the staff.

"Good evening," the Headmistress said happily. "I hope we didn't keep you."

Everyone turned to look at Fitzy, who was about to report her starvation when Harry stuck a dinner roll into her mouth laughing.

“Well, now that we are all here, I have a few announcements to make concerning the staffing of the school,” Madame Klump began. “As you may have noticed we have a new addition with us tonight. I would like to introduce everyone to Tepthilda Konkle, our new Arithmancy teacher.” Which caused everyone but Harry, Vesta, Celeste and Tepthilda all turned to look at Angus Evanston wondering why he wouldn’t be teaching his classes in this year.

Angus looked at them and said, “I will be retiring at the end of the school year.”

“Does this mean that Ms. Konkle will be the new Deputy Headmistress?” gruffly asked Professor Botolf Proctor.

“By no means does that mean that, she is far too young and inexperienced for that responsibility,” Madame Klump replied to him easily. “She is only becoming our new Arithmancy teacher. Angus and I will be selecting a new Deputy Head by the end of the school year. We have more than one candidate in mind for the position.”

“How will you be selecting Angus’ replacement? Taking applications?” Professor Proctor asked.

“We’ll be discussing that later, but first I wanted to also introduce the two new guests we have in our school for his year,” Madame Klump announced to them. “Harry has taken a ward this summer named Tommy and this is his governess, Zinnia Talmadge. I’ve given them an unused classroom on the third floor for them to use for his schooling.” Then she turned to them and said, “If have need of anything just be sure to ask.”

Nanny Talmadge nodded understandingly while Tommy looked excited and asked, “Does that mean I can have a racing broom?”

Everyone chuckled as Fitzzy said,
“Yeah, your Harry’s kid alright.”

This story is a work oin progres and will be updated as new chapters become availble. Look for them on file share or contact me by email or on Yahoo chat.

gboyary@yahoo.com

Chapter Sixteen: The Children Have Returned

Harry sat there at the table calmly eating breakfast and watched as it once again happened to him.

“HARRY JAMES POTTER, WHO BLOOD TRAITOR ABOMINATION SON OF A WHORE!” screeched the voice of Narcissa Malfoy. “HOW DARE YOU KEEP MY FAMILY’S WEALTH FROM ME! I DEMAND THAT YOU RETURN FULL CONTROL OF THE MY FAMILY’S VAULTS TO ME IMMEDIATELY! YOU HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO RIGHT TO KEEP ME FROM IT! I AWAIT YOUR RETURN OWL WITH THE MASTER KEY THIS VERY MORNING!”

Then the howler exploded into a shower of ash and smoke, leaving Harry to once again dig into his kippers and toast. “Good morning to you to Narcissa,” he said after he had swallowed his food.

The other teachers who were sitting at the table having breakfast all turned to look at Harry. “How ever does one get used to daily howlers?” asked the young teacher, Tepthilda Konkle.

“Actually,” Fitzzy answered, “after a while, you start to miss them when you’re not eating breakfast with Harry every morning.”

The other teachers shook with laughter.

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Looking up from his desk where he was making lesson plans, Harry says, “Good morning kiddo,” as a blurry eyed Tommy stumbled into his office.

“Morning,” he pajama clad boy whispers, still not yet awake.

Harry smiles affectionately at him and asks, “What are you doing out in the castle this morning, you look like you should still be in bed?”

“You weren’t there and I wanted to see where you were,” he replied, though still very tired from the traveling and excitement of yesterday.

“Well, I’m here working on my lesson plans and getting my classroom and office organized for the upcoming year, which starts tomorrow. Why don’t you go back up and find Nanny and see if you can’t get into something other than your pajamas,” Harry said to him and then called for “Dobby.”

Moments later the elf popped into the room and said, “Yes, Harry Potter, is you’s needing something?”

“Yeah Dobby, would you help Tommy here back to his room, into some clothes and help him find some breakfast?”

“Of course, I is doing it right away,” squeaked the elf happily.

“Tommy,” Harry began, but the boy had curled up into the couch in the corner of his office and started to drift off to sleep once more. Harry and Dobby both smiled, as he shook the boy and said, “After I’m done here, we can go down to the pitch together and ride our brooms and I’ll teach you Quidditch.”

Tommy’s eyes shot open in anticipation. It didn’t matter if he had once been the darkest wizard in centuries to walk the Earth or not, Quidditch was still Quidditch, and every little boy loves Quidditch.

“Really?” he asked, getting very excited.

“Uh huh,” Harry replied, “but first you have to get dressed and eat something. You can’t play on an empty stomach you know?”

Now wide awake, Tommy grabs Dobby’s hand and together they go scurrying through the castle back to tower where the staff live, leaving Harry behind laughing.

“Well what was that?” asked a bewildered Fitzzy as she passed in the corridor.

“That, my dear Maude Fitzhugh,” Harry said in an amused voice, “Was a six year old boy about to have his very first Quidditch lesson out on our very own pitch.”

Fitzzy rolled her eyes at him, “Why don’t you have children of your own? You’d make a great father.”

Harry looked pensive for a moment and replied, “Maybe someday.”

“No, not someday, you should do it now, while your young and can enjoy it the most,” the plump Charms teacher replied, but then thought about it. “No, I somehow think that even if you’re a hundred years old, you’d still try to get on a broom and play seeker.”

“And I’d catch it too,” said Harry with a smirk.

Fitzzy scoffed and said, “Why is it all men think that their penis is ... oh wait, I forgot, yours is that big.” Then she turned and walked down to her office leaving Harry slightly red faced.

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A short time later, after Harry is finished setting up his lesson plans for his Defense Against the Dark Arts classes, he returns to his quarters to find Tommy and to retrieve his Firebolt.

“Tommy?” he says as he enters his sitting room.

“He’s in his room getting dressed, Dobby fed him enough food, you may have trouble getting him off the ground today,” said the painting of Sirius Black.

Harry smiled, "Good morning Sirius."

"So are you going to ever tell me what's going on with the boy or are you going to make me waste valuable time playing a guessing game?"

"Depends on how good you are at guessing?" Harry said with a devilish grin.

Sirius huffed and said, "Don't make me climb out of this painting and spank you."

"I'd like to see you try," Harry said defiantly, but knew in his heart he would have to have this conversation sooner or later. "Remember yesterday, when you commented in Tommy's name?"

Sirius nodded wanting his godson to continue.

"You see there is a reason that his name is Tommy Riddle, that's because he is Tom Riddle."

Sirius looked confused for a moment, "Harry you've been hanging around Albus Dumbledore too much, you're beginning to talk in riddles like he does."

Harry sighed and tried again, "No Sirius, I mean that Tommy, the boy who is my legal ward, is the rejuvenated form of Voldemort. When he and I dueled at the end of my seventh year, I thought I had killed him, but instead it seems that I used the Charms of Making to return him to an infant and cleanse him of the evil that is Voldemort."

"WHAT?!?" bellowed Sirius. "You mean to tell me that you've taken in the very person who murdered your parents and damned you to years of suffering? Why in the name of Merlin would you do such a thing?"

"If I hadn't taken him in, they would have killed him and besides Dumbledore talked me into it," Harry began. "It doesn't matter Sirius, he needs me and since I did this to him, it's my responsibility to look after him now to see that he doesn't grow up to become a monster once again." Harry was soon becoming weary, he had this argument too many times now and he was tired of having it repeatedly.

"Dumbledore did this to you?" growled Sirius. "Well, I think I need to have a little talk with that old man." Then Sirius walked out of his painting and not into any of the others that were hanging in the room.

'Where did he go?' Harry thought to himself and then he remembered that if there was more than one painting of Sirius, then he could move in between them freely. 'Dumbledore must have one of Sirius also, he meant for Sirius to spy on me for him. He probably planned on me taking Tommy in even when he gave me this painting way back then.'

"Manipulative old son of a ..." Harry began but stopped when he saw Tommy walk out of his room carrying his junior broom. Harry pushed his anger down for the moment and said, "Ready to go flying?"

“Yeah,” Tommy grinned with anticipation.

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Down on the pitch, Tommy helped Harry look over the Cleansweeps to make sure they were still in good working order and then the two of them walked out to the middle of the pitch with their brooms.

Harry set his broom on the ground and indicated for Tommy to do the same, “Now, I don’t know if this is going to work or not, as you might be too young still. I’ve never taught anyone under the age of eleven to use a broom before, so let’s see if this works. Now stand on the left side of your broom, raise your right hand over it and say ‘up.’”

Tommy did as he was told, but the broom didn’t move and he looked crestfallen, as if he had failed.

Harry smiled and said, “Don’t worry, you may be too young as I said, or maybe ...” thinking about it Harry had an idea. “Tommy, try with my broom, it may be that junior brooms won’t do this trick.”

So the boy walked over and tried it again with Harry’s Firebolt. The broom didn’t jump up into his hand, but instead lazily floated up to his hand. Tommy beamed.

“It’s probably the junior broom, but that was brilliant,” praised Harry, as he handed the boy his junior broom back and together they mounted their brooms and took off. Tommy’s broom didn’t raise very high, just high enough his toes to scrape the ground and Harry flew just as low so they would be together.

If anyone had been watching who didn’t know them, they would have sworn they were watching a touching father/son moment as Harry taught Tommy how to maneuver his broom around the pitch. However, the only people watching were Professor Taryn Whitlock, who was tending to the animals he would be teaching about in the first week of classes and Professor Tepthilda Konkle, who was standing in the archway of the main entrance.

After an hour of flying together, Harry stopped Tommy and they set down.

“Why can’t I fly anymore?” whined Tommy, but Harry ignored him and picked him up and set him on the Firebolt with him. Then they shot three hundred feet straight up into the air causing Tommy to scream with delight. Smirking Harry kicked the Firebolt into action and they began to race around the pitch as fast the old broom would go making scream even loader.

“THIS IS SO COOL!”

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As Harry and Tommy were walking through the entrance hall of the castle, they passed Edwina’s office and Harry overheard what was the unmistakable gruff voice of

Botolf Proctor.

“Edwina, be reasonable. You can at least tell us who is in the running to be the deputy head of the school.”

Harry was rather keen to know the answer to that as well.

“Tommy,” Harry said politely, “I just remembered I need to see the Headmistress before the celebration tonight, would you mind running along to our quarters alone?”

Tommy smiled and began to run through the castle whooping at the freedom he was just given as Harry looked around to make sure he was alone before transforming into his second animagus form of a cat and began to poke around.

Entering the office Harry heard the conversation in progress.

“Botolf, I assure you, no one will be installed into the position before everyone who is interested in it will have a chance to apply for it,” Edwina stated plainly.

“Yes, you’ve said that before, but I wanted to know who you and Angus have in mind for the position,” Proctor replied. “I can guess that Angus will want Terentia because of her age, she is the senior member of staff outside of the two of you. I would gather that you are probably rather have Potter as your right hand man, as you practically drool on him ever since he saved the school.”

Edwina looked somewhat annoyed with the transfiguration teacher but let it slip by as she knew he wanted the position and was afraid of being over looked. “Botolf, I have told you before, Angus and I have been thinking about it and we have four different people in mind and you are indeed one of them. However, who the other four are will have to wait until we have time to think about it further. After the school year is underway, we will be talking to all four of you to discover who truly wants the position.”

Proctor huffed about it for a minute and then left the office.

Sitting in the corner as small black cat was watching the scene and was thinking, ‘Damn.’

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Later that evening, after Harry had taken a shower and put on a fresh set of dress robes for the occasion, he heard Tommy come into his bedroom and sit on the bed.

“Harry, why can’t I come to the feast tonight?”

Harry sat down beside him and explained, “Because you’re too young, we’ll be up past your bedtime and it’s for the students who are enrolled in the school. You can come down tomorrow and meet everyone, I promise.”

“But I want to come down tonight.”

“Tommy,” Harry said in a warning tone, “I know you want to come, but you know you can’t. You’re going to have a nice supper up here with Nanny and Dobby and then you’re going to bed on time tonight. Tomorrow you are going to start school work just like everyone else in the castle and I want you rested for it and that’s that.”

Together they got up from the bed and Harry took his ward to Nanny Talmadge’s quarters next door to his own and left Tommy with her before proceeding down to the main floor of the castle to wait for the students to arrive.

“So what do we do now?” Harry asked Vesta when he arrived in the entry.

“Not much until the carriages return with the students in them,” she replied as he snaked his arm around her waist. “Stop that,” she admonished, “We’re not back in Grimmauld Place and you really shouldn’t be acting this way in front of the students.”

Fitzy snorted behind them, “Get a room you two.”

“What a great idea,” Harry said and began to nibble on curve of Vesta’s neck.

“Harry James Potter, you stop that at once. I will not be the laughing stock of this school,” Vesta said to him sternly and he ignored her as he began to suck on one of her earlobes.

“I don’t think he’s listening to you Vesta,” laughed Fitzy.

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Harry stopped what he was doing after a few minutes and a threat from Vesta about the use of shrinking potions in his morning coffee and they began to greet students as the carriages arrived through the golden gates.

“Professor!” bellowed Will Beagle when he saw Harry standing in the entrance hall.

“Will, Xander,” Harry called out them and patted each on the back when they got to him. “How was your summer?”

“It was great sir,” said Will.

“Yeah, it was great, if you like watching your brother having a baby and cooing over his boyfriend,” replied Xander sarcastically.

“Xander, don’t be so glum. Some day you’ll fall in love and want to make a family too and it doesn’t mean you’ll do it like your brother at all,” Harry said, trying to be supportive of his student.

“I hope so.”

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As the dining hall quieted down and everyone had taken their seats, Professor Morgan and Professor Konkle came into the hall with twelve eleven year olds and marched them up to the staff table. Harry watched as the students were lined up facing them and then he looked over and saw that Madame Klump was looking down her nose at them pretending to size them up to make sure they were worthy to study magic in her school. Harry remembered her doing this to him last year.

Then Professor Morgan made her announcement as was his part of the ritual, “Madame Klump, esteemed teachers, I would like to humbly present these new students for inspection.”

Unknown to the frightened looking first year students, but the two witches standing behind them were making faces at the headmistress trying to make her laugh, which was also part of the tradition of the school. Trying to make the headmistress and staff laugh so their students would be accepted more readily was an old and treasured tradition among the staff.

Soon the two Professor Thorne’s were cracking smiles and Fitzzy was laughing out right as the two class sponsors performed a confundance charm on the first years and began to dance for the staff. Harry noticed that the entire staff, with the exception of himself, Professor Proctor and his beloved Professor Sangeorge, was the only ones not shaking with laughter as Celeste Morgan; a witch in her early fifties was doing a Muggle style fan dance.

Harry was trying his level headed best not to break out laughing, but felt if it didn’t end soon he would break, especially as Professor Konkle a large blue clown’s wig and placed it on her head. He was strong and he convinced himself that he would not break; it wasn’t until he looked over at Vesta that he met his undoing. As he looked at her, he saw she was going through the same thing he was and when their eyes met, they both burst out laughing.

Finally, however, Madame Klump gave in and stopped the show that was going on before them and directed the students to their appropriate tables and explained the tradition to yet another generation of students.

After calming down and wiping away the tears from her eyes, Madame Klump rose from her seat cleared her throat in order for any lingering students attention and to find their proper places at their tables so that she may begin her start-of-term speech to begin the new school year.

“Good evening students, once again we start a brand new school year saying goodbye to old friends and saying hello to the new. Last year we said goodbye to our graduating class and this year we’ve just met a wonderful group of young people and I am pleased to announce we have a new member of staff this year. Professor Tepthilda Konkle will be taking over the teaching of Arithmancy as Professor Evanston has regrettably decided to retire from teaching.”

The sounds of polite applause filled the hall for a few moments

Madame Klump then continued and began her annual speech covering Honeychurch’s

history. “The Honeychurch Institute of Magic was founded in 1527 by the Honeychurch family which, unfortunately, has long ago died out.” As he had the year before Harry zoned out during the speech and began thinking about other things, flying on his broom, what they were going to talk about in his first class tomorrow, but mostly he thought about what Vesta would look like laying naked on his bed as he licked and tipped at her creamy smooth skin. His mind wondered to the thought of his head between her breasts licking her breast bone and then moving over to take in one of her erect nipples into his mouth and the moans he would entice her to make for him. However, he was brought out of his thoughts when he heard the Headmistress say, “...and let the New Year Celebration begin.”

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Once the New Year Celebration was over and all the plates were magically cleaned, Madame Klump dismissed the student body and the sleepy pupils made their way to their dormitories.

“Harry?” Professor Morgan asked.

“Yeah?”

“I hate to ask, but could you walk the boys to Brutus Tower? Both Tepthilda and I are going to take the girls to Desdrilla Tower and I don’t know the password to get in.”

“Of course, I’d be happy to take them for you. I think I even know two little helpers for me also,” said Harry with a smile as he looked over at Will Beagle and Xander Malfoy.

“Have fun then,” she said and walked over to the table to collect the first year girls.

Harry walks over to his two wayward boys and taps them on the shoulder.

“Gentlemen, I have a task for you, if you feel up to it.”

Will nodded his head and looked guilty about something, while Xander looked suspicious.

Harry continued, “I have been asked to show the first year boys to their dormitory and I was hoping you would walk with us and help show them around the tower. However, before we go anywhere would the two of like to tell me why you’re sitting here looking like I just caught you red handed doing something wrong?”

Xander looked to Will, who answered, “Because you’re paranoid sir.”

Chapter Seventeen: First Day of Classes

“Good morning.”

Harry stirred in bed and looked over at Vesta, who had just emerged from the bathroom, drying her hair with a warming charm.

“Morning,” Harry said blurrily. “What time is it?”

“Time to get up,” she replied with a smirk and bent down and kissed him on the forehead.

Smiling Harry pulled her down on top of him on the bed, “You’re wish is my command.”

Feeling Harry stiffen under the duvet, Vesta kissed him again and smiling she said, “Oh no you don’t, not this morning your not.”

“And why not?” asked Harry with a hint of a whine. A very masculine whine of course, I mean come on, guys his age don’t whine like a little kid after all, do they?

“Three reasons.”

“And what would those be?” he asked as he began to gently kiss her jaw line.

“Well, to begin with, my potion wore off last night,” she counted. “Second, we have to make a good impression on the new students in the dining hall and really shouldn’t be late for that.”

“And third?” asked Harry as he nibbled on her ear.

“Well for third, that would be Tommy and Chloe Honeychurch standing in the doorway watching us.”

“WHAT?” Harry said abruptly and tossed his beloved Vesta to one side to witness Tommy standing there grinning at him as the young ghost of Chloe Honeychurch had both hands over her mouth giggling madly.

“Hiya Harry,” Tommy said before turning and walking back into the sitting room with Chloe.

As Harry was making sure the kids weren’t watching him anymore, he leaned over the side of the bed to retrieve his boxers and as he was walking into the bathroom he swore he heard Chloe say to Tommy, “I told you he was frisky in the mornings.”

((Section Break))

About an hour later, Harry and Vesta were walking into the dining hall with Tommy walking in between them. Vesta still had a smile plastered to her face from Harry’s embarrassment at being caught by Tommy.

“Stop smirking Vesta,” Harry said irritably out of the side of his mouth to her when they reached the teachers table.

“No, I don’t think so. I have to give Fitzzy something to latch onto don’t I?”

Harry groaned silently and took a seat at the table as Tommy scrambled into the chair beside his.

“Good morning all,” came the cheery voice of Professor Maude Fitzhugh as she took her seat beside her best friend. It didn’t take her very long to notice that Vesta was rather amused this morning and Harry was looking like he was rather embarrassed about something. This intrigued her. So taking a drink of her pumpkin juice she asked, “So what’s going on this morning?”

Harry shot Vesta a look that clearly said, ‘Don’t you dare tell her,’ however, it was Tommy who answered.

“Nothing much, I just caught Harry frisking Vesta.”

Fitzzy spit her pumpkin juice across the table while Vesta chuckled quite merrily to herself.

((Section Break))

After breakfast was over with Harry, though he loved them all very much, was actually happy to be rid of everyone. All he wanted to do was teach his first class of fifth years and begin preparing them for their O.W.L. exams at the end of the year.

“Good morning everyone,” Harry said happily to the seven fifteen year olds.

A few of them responded enthusiastically, but deep down, they all knew for sure, they were getting homework today.

“Now as you all know this is you O.W.L. year and this year we are going to have crack down and study harder this year. As you know O.W.L.’s are very important to your future career goals but I don’t want any of you thinking this year is just going to be review, you’re going to be learning many amazing things,” Harry announced to the class, who groaned knowing that it was now official; they would be getting a lot of homework.

Laughing to himself, Harry added, “Don’t worry, your going to be having fun this year also. Now I’d like to begin with an overview of the past four years of Defense Against the Dark Arts, however, we are doing it in the form of game. There are going to be two teams of two and one of three.” Then with a flick of his wand, Harry conjured a large spinning wheel with various subjects written in each panel with a large pointer that pointed to the selected target. Turning to the students, he conjured three podiums for each team to stand at as they played.

“Now since there are three boys in this class, I suggest that they team up together and the girls break into two teams of two,” suggested Harry, as he turned back to the

students after conjuring everything he needed that morning. To his amazement, they had already formed their own teams. “You perhaps, you can pick your own.”

Standing behind his teaching podium, Harry gives the wheel a spin and it lands on ‘dark creatures.’ “Alright, I’ll read the question and the first team with the correct answer gets the point,” Harry explained and then read the first question about Grindylows.

Then for the remainder of their time together that morning, they all played that game and everyone was having so much fun, that they didn’t want to leave to go to Charms class down the hall.

“Maybe we’ll be lucky and Professor Fitzhugh will play a game with us also,” Spencer Woodrow said to Bernadette Myers as they left the class.

“Oh, let’s hope so.”

Harry smiled to himself as threw his invisibility cloak over the wheel. He was rather pleased that his idea for the reviewing game had worked out and that he was popular again among the fifth years, as he didn’t give them homework ... yet.

A few minutes later eight fourth years trooped into his classroom from the greenhouses, looking like they had been through the ringer already this morning.

“Did everyone have fun this morning in Herbology?” asked Harry, who received several noncommittal grunts of displeasure. Smiling, he said, “I’ll take that as a ‘no’ . Now everyone take your seats, we have a lot of work to do this morning, as I have decided we are going to review the last three years of work before we dive into new material.” Knowing he had everyone’s attention, he pulled the invisibility cloak off of the large wheel at the front of the room.

“I think we should split up into teams now,” Harry said and again repeated the game with the fourth years that morning.

((Section Break))

After his morning classes are over with Harry packs his things into his office and seals it with a complicated locking spell before rushing off to escort Vesta to lunch. Upon reaching her potions laboratory, Harry discovers that it is vacant. Confused for a moment, Harry suddenly remembers that she has second period free on Mondays.

“Damn, should’ve remembered that.”

Minutes later he enters the dining hall and finds Vesta already sitting at the teacher’s table talking to Tommy and Nanny Talmadge about something.

“Good afternoon,” he says pleasantly.

“You’re in a much better mood than this morning,” Vesta says teasingly.

“Quiet,” he replies and gives her a kiss on the forehead that makes several of the girls giggle about it.

Putting her stern face on, Vesta says loud enough for the giggling girls to hear, “Professor Potter, I will remind you what we are teachers and should set a good example for the students.”

“You’re right Professor Sangeorge, I am terribly sorry; you were looking for beautiful that I forgot myself for a moment.” Then Harry reaches over and kisses her on the cheek. “Is that better?”

“I don’t know about her, but it was good for me,” Fitzzy said, as she took her seat at the table, which caused Harry to smirk.

“Harry,” asked Tommy, “When I grow up am I going to go around all the time kissing girls?”

“As long as you have their permission, I don’t see a reason why you can’t.”

“Do I have to?” asked Tommy disappointed.

“Not if you don’t want to, but you may change your mind when you grow up,” Harry said to the boy smiling at the time.

“I have a question for you Harry,” said Fitzzy playfully. “What’s this game that you played with the fifth years this morning? They begged me to play it, but I didn’t have a clue what it was about.”

“Games?” growled Professor Proctor, “Are you playing games instead of teaching them Potter?”

Ignoring the gruff Transfiguration teacher, Harry replied, “Have you every played a Muggle game called trivial pursuit?”

“When I was younger I did,” admitted Fitzzy.

“Basically, the same thing, but make all the questions about Charms and you can play it.”

“Hmmm, I’ll think about it then,” Fitzzy said intrigued by the idea.

Confused about the whole conversation Professor Konkle asks, “I don’t understand, are you a Muggle born Professor Potter?”

“No, but my mother was. I grew up with my Muggle relatives after my parents died,” explained Harry. “That game I mention was the only one my cousin Dudley wouldn’t play with. I don’t even think he opened it.”

“Why wouldn’t he open a present?” asked Tommy.

“He didn’t like games or toys that made him think too much,” Harry replied chuckling.

“I take it you opened it, didn’t you?” Tepthilda asked in a purr.

Fitzzy heard the purr, and gave her best friend a look to see if Vesta had heard it as well, she had. However, Vesta was ignoring the flirting girl; she knew full well Harry probably hadn’t even noticed her.

“Well, yeah, I did,” admitted Harry, “I learned quite a bit from that game too.”

“I’m sure you did.”

((Section Break))

When lunch was over with, Harry took Vesta’s hand into his own and walked her down the hallway to the potions classroom. Tommy tagged along for the fun of it.

“Harry?” asked Tommy.

“Yes.”

“Why are you walking Vesta down the hall? Her classroom isn’t that far away.”

Smiling Harry replied, “It’s always good to escort the woman you love back to her home, or in this case her classroom.”

“Why?”

“That way we get to spend that much more time together.”

Frowning, Tommy thought about it for a moment, as they reached the classroom and Harry gave his lady a quick kiss.

“Have a good time in class,” Harry whispered into her ear.

“I have the fifth years next, we’re going to be going over potions for the upcoming O.W.L.’s,” said Vesta. “It’s not going to be a fun class for anyone.”

Chuckling to himself, Harry bends down and allows Tommy to jump up on his back and together they speed back up to the Defense Against the Dark Arts classroom.

((Section Break))

“Good afternoon everyone,” Harry said merrily as he strode in with a six year old on his back.

“Am I staying with you in class?” asked Tommy hopefully.

“No you are not young man,” said a voice from the doorway. There Zinnia Talmadge stood waiting patiently for her charge to come with her to their classroom upstairs.

“Gotta go,” Tommy said as he scrambled after the elderly witch.

“Alright now,” Harry said as he turned his attention back to the class. “Some of you were in this class last year and may well remember how things go in N.E.W.T. level Defense, but the rest of you were busy taking your O.W.L.’s to know. So I’m going to take a few moments to explain how things work in this class.”

So over the next half and hour, Harry lectured the class on what was to be expected of them for the coming term and some of the things that they were going to cover. Then after that they spent all of the time taking notes as Harry lectured them on what to expect on their N.E.W.T.’s.

When class was over, the exhausted sixth years left the classroom, while the seventh years approached Harry with a request.

“Professor?”

“Yes,” answered Harry as he turned to the seventh years.

Audrey Simmons, the short, pudgy Muggle born witch was the spokesperson for the group, “Yes would like to make a request for the upcoming year, sir.”

“Anything in particular you want to learn?”

“Actually, we were hoping that this year you wouldn’t give a demonstration on the Unforgivable Curses,” Audrey said purposefully.

“Ms. Simmons, you know full well that you need to have an understanding in them for your examinations at the end of the year,” Harry explained. “I can’t be irresponsible enough to allow for that.”

“You don’t understand sir,” Audrey said, “We’ve already seen the demonstration and the sixth years won’t need to see it until next year.”

“That’s not a good enough reason for me to remove it from the syllabus?”

“How about the fact it is very hard on you to demonstrate it?” asked Michael Gerard.

“Mr. Gerard,” Harry began, but was cut off by Audrey Simmons.

“Sir, please, just think about it.”

“Alright,” Harry agreed, “I’ll think it over.”

Later that evening as Harry was crawling into his bed, where Vesta was already waiting on him reading a potions book. He began to nibble on her on bare shoulder seductively.

“Not tonight, I’m busy.”

“Awwww,” whined Harry. Of course, it was a masculine whine filled with testosterone and other manly juices and not some little whine that a child would make. He couldn’t have that of course.

Smiling, Vesta said, “Stop whining like a baby.”

“I didn’t,” protested Harry.

“Yes, you are,” Vesta said smirking. “If you’re feeling randy, go knock on Tepthilda’s door, I’m sure she can accommodate you this evening.”

“Tepthilda?” asked Harry confused. “What are you on about?”

“You mean you didn’t notice her flirting with at lunch today like a slut in a red dress?”

“Slut in a red dress?” asked Harry, “Vesta, honey, you’ve got to stop hanging out with Fitzzy.”

Vesta, however, gave Harry a look and continued, “She was flirting with you.”

“I hadn’t noticed,” Harry said truthfully.

“You mean to tell me that you didn’t enjoy her fawning over you today.”

“No, I wasn’t,” Harry protested.

Putting her book down on the side table, she said, “Yes, you were.”

“No, I was not,” Harry said again, as he snaked his arm around her waist and began to tickle her gently.

Giggling slightly, Vesta said, “I said no, Mister Potter.”

“Why not Mrs. Potter?”

Vesta stopped and looked at him, “Was that a proposal?”

“Ah,” Harry sputtered for a moment, “Maybe, kind of sorta, would you like it to be one?”

Stunned Vesta responded in kind, “Maybe, kind of sorta.”

Rolling over to his side of the bed, Harry opened a drawer in his night table and pulls out a small box. Rolling back to his beloved lady, he opens it and shows her a ring.

“This was the ring my grandfather gave my grandmother, you know the one’s who owned that cottage we had our holiday in this summer. It’s the promise ring he gave

her, when their marriage was arranged by their parents. I know the custom has died out in the wizarding world, but I thought you might like to have it. If you wanted it that is.”

“Oh Harry,” Vesta said with a tear in her eye.

“If it’s too soon, I can put it away and we can pretend it never happened,” Harry replied, worried.

“Put it on my finger.”

Smiling Harry took the ring from the velvet box and placed it on her finger. The ring was smaller than Vesta’s finger, but it magically resized itself to fit her perfectly. “It looks beautiful on you.”

“I love you, you know?” asked Vesta with a tear slowly falling down the silky smooth skin of her face.

“Thank goodness, I’d feel really stupid otherwise,” Harry said with a smirk and then claimed her mouth with his own and began to kiss her passionately. Soon Harry moved from her mouth to her jaw line and then to the nape of her neck, where he really began to snog her.

“I guess this is one way to get me to put out,” she said with a giggle.

Harry ignored her, for him, this wasn’t just sex, they were making love. That’s what he told himself as he pulled her negligee from her creamy smooth skin and began to kiss her breasts, taking each of her rosy nipples into his mouth, one at a time. Harry was really beginning to enjoy himself when suddenly he felt his scar prickle.

“Ouch,” Harry said.

“What’s wrong, Harry?”

“Nothing,” Harry replied, “I just want to check on Tommy before we go any farther.” Then Harry hopped out of bed and started to make his way to the bedroom door.

“Oh, Harry,” Vesta said and he turned to look at her when he was hit in the face with a piece of cloth. “You might want to put that on unless you want to parade yourself naked in front of a six year old boy.”

“Thanks,” Harry replied and slipped his boxers back on and left the room.

Making his way across the sitting room to Tommy’s bedroom, he opens the door, and discovers the boy tossing and turning in his sleep and muttering to himself. Quickly making his way to the bed, Harry tries to wake Tommy up in order to end the nightmare he is experiencing. Not waking up, Harry grabs the boy and shakes him harder.

Sniffing Tommy comes to himself and realizing that Harry is with him, buries his

head in Harry's bare chest. "Harry?"

"Yeah, it's me, are you alright?"

"I had a bad dream about a dark wizard who wants to hurt you," Tommy cried into Harry's chest.

"No one's going to hurt me," Harry said soothingly.

"He is."

"Who is that then?" asked Harry.

"V... V... V..." Tommy said, before crying too hard to be understood.

Chapter Eighteen: Dreams and Surprises

"It's okay Tommy, it was just a dream," Harry said to the crying boy.

"He wants to hurt you Harry," wailed Tommy. "Please don't let him hurt you."

"It's okay," Harry said gently, "I don't think that wizard is alive anymore."

"Are you sure?"

"Not entirely, but mostly I am," Harry said with a smile.

Sniffing hard Tommy said, "I j... j... just don't w... want to lose you."

"You don't have to lose me, kid," Harry said comfortingly and gave Tommy a big hug. "Do you think you're ready to try to go back to sleep now?"

Tommy nodded into Harry's chest and then turned away to snuggle once again into his bedding and Harry tucked him in and started to get up to leave.

"Harry?"

"Yeah, Tommy?" responded Harry.

"Stay with me."

Smiling Harry said, "Okay." Then Harry sat back on the bed and lay down beside the boy until he was sound asleep again.

A few minutes later, as he listened to Tommy's peaceful breathing, Harry rose gently from the bed and left the room to return to Vesta.

'Where did he ever learn that name I wonder?'

Walking back through the sitting room Harry heard a soft 'woof' from the painting and saw to his delight that it's occupant had returned.

"Sirius?" Harry said. "You're back."

Transforming back into a human the painting replied, "Yeah, just got back a few moments ago. How's the rug rat?"

"He's fine, just a nightmare," Harry replied. "Since I don't see parts of Dumbledore's back side hanging out of your fangs, I assume that he twinkled his way out of it again."

Sirius growled under his breath, "That man spins more riddles and half truths than anyone else in the wizarding world."

"My childhood, welcome to it."

Sirius laughed, "Yeah, I guess you would understand that more than anyone else wouldn't you."

"So I take it that there is another painting of you at Hogwarts as well as here?" Harry asked pointedly.

"Uh, yeah," Sirius replied realizing that Harry didn't know that. "Didn't he tell you about it?"

"What do you think?"

"I think I'm going to plead ignorance on that one Harry."

Smiling Harry said, "Coward. So how many paintings of you are there in the world?"

"Just the two. Albus wanted you to be able to communicate with him in case of an emergency."

"And yet, he neglected to tell me about the second one. He wouldn't be spying on me now would he?"

"No, Harry! I promise you I have never spied on you for him," Sirius promised. "Marauder's Oath!"

Harry relented and smiled at the painting of his godfather, "So what did the barmy old codger have to say for himself this time?"

"The same thing you told me, but I could swear that there is more there that he wasn't telling me."

"My adulthood, welcome to it."

A short time later, Harry made it back to his lady, who was waiting for him in their bed.

“Vesta,” Harry cooed into the darkness of the room.

Silence answered him.

“Vesta, are you asleep?”

Unfortunately she was.

“Damn.”

Smiling Harry slips off his boxers and crawls into bed with her and holds her tight.

The next morning, Harry actually managed to wake up before Vesta and silently crawled out of bed so not to disturb her. However, as he watched her sleep, he couldn't help but feel a warmth in the middle of his chest and bending down he kissed her shoulder and whispered, “I love you Mrs. Potter.”

Then he crept silently into the sitting room, remembering to bring his boxers along, as he had slipped them off before going to bed the night before and sat down at his writing table and began to compose a letter. Harry had never been this nervous when composing a letter before, but then again this was the most important letter he would ever write, so he had to do it right the first time.

“Harry?”

“Yeah, Sirius?”

“As much of a turn on it is to watch my naked godson sitting there, don't you think it would be a good idea to actually put the boxers on, instead of laying them on the arm of your chair?”

“Very funny,” Harry said as he placed his seal on the letter and started to get dressed. Creeping back into the bedroom, he retrieved his robes and shoes and also put them on, left his quarters in order to find Hedwig.

A short time later, Harry returns to his quarters to find Tommy still sleeping in his bed and Vesta in the shower. Smiling to himself, Harry kicks off his shoes and pulls off his clothes and walks into the bathroom to join her in the shower.

“Morning,” Harry said as he jumped into the water.

“Morning,” Vesta replied as she gave him a kiss. “Where were you when I woke up?”

“I had an urgent piece of post that needed to go out as soon as possible, so I went up the owlery to have Hedwig take it off for me,” explained Harry as he began to nibble on her shoulder.

“That feels nice,” purred the potions mistress as Harry’s hands began to massage her back.

“Yes, it does,” the defense teacher agreed seductively.

Turning around Vesta slid her arms around Harry’s neck, as he wrapped his around her waist pulling her closer to him. Finding each others mouth, they began to kiss passionately making up for the missed opportunity from the night before.

“Ouch,” Harry said, as his scar once more prickled.

“What’s wrong Harry?”

“Nothing, just my scar giving me some trouble this morning,” Harry said offhandedly, trying to get back to what they were doing mere moments before.

“Harry,” Vesta said warningly. She hated not knowing when things were going wrong for him.

“Honey, it’s okay,” Harry said soothingly. “It just prickled a little. It’s no big deal.”

Turning the water off, Vesta said, “Let’s go check on Tommy to be sure.”

“Damn.”

After getting dressed, Harry and Vesta walk into Tommy’s room expecting to find him in the middle of another nightmare; however, what they find instead was completely unexpected.

“Morning, Harry,” Tommy said happily. “Morning, Vesta.”

“Good morning Tommy, what’s going on in here?” asked Vesta pleasantly.

“I’m just playing with my new friend here.”

“Good morning everyone,” she said pleasantly.

“Morning, Tepthilda, how are you this morning?” asked Harry suspiciously.

“Oh, I’m fine, just playing with this little rascal here.”

Harry smiled and said to Tommy, “Well, this little rascal needs to get dressed this morning or else he’ll miss breakfast.” Then he turned to the new teacher and said, “Why don’t we give him some privacy?”

“Of course,” she replied and the adults left the boy to get dressed alone.

Once everyone was in the sitting room, Vesta turned to the younger witch and asked, “Tepthilda, how did you manage to get into our rooms this morning? I don’t recall giving you the password.”

“Oh, I have my ways,” she replied seductively to the two other teachers. “I’m just full of surprises.”

“I bet you are,” Harry said, while thinking that he needed to change the password as soon as possible.

“Yes,” Vesta agreed.

“Oh now, don’t be mad at me,” cooed the Arithmancy teacher. “I just wanted to come by this morning and see if you needing anything before going down to breakfast with the rest of the school.”

“I can’t imagine what that might be,” Vesta asked pointedly.

However, before anyone could say anything else, Tommy came tumbling into the room, fully dressed and announced, “Come on everyone, I’m hungry.”

A short time later, as Harry and Vesta took their usual seats at the staff table with Tommy about to take the vacant one beside his mentor, when Tepthilda beat him to it. Both Harry and Vesta were not happy when they saw the look of disappointment on Tommy’s face. He always sat beside Harry at breakfast.

However, Tommy didn’t let that stop him and he crawled up into Harry’s lap to have breakfast there, which caused Harry to smile at him.

“You know something kiddo?”

“What Harry?” asked Tommy.

“You’re soon going to be too big to sit in my lap anymore.”

Looking crestfallen, Tommy asked, “Does that mean I have to get down?”

“No,” Harry said smiling still, “It just means that someday you’ll have to.”

“Good!” Tommy said and began to eat breakfast as the post owls began to arrive with the morning mail.

Vesta was still looking oddly at Tepthilda, as she opened her copy of the Daily Prophet and paid the owl.

“Oh look Harry,” Tommy squealed, “Here’s comes a red one for you.”

Looking up Harry witnessed as Narcissa Malfoy’s owl once again brought him his daily howler, before it took off again in a vain attempt to escape the noise it would produce.

“HARRY POTTER, YOU MERCILESS SON OF A BLOOD TRAITOR! HOW DARE YOU KEEP ME FROM MY RIGHTFUL INHERITANCE! I DEMAND THAT YOU RETURN TO ME ALL THE TITLES AND PROPERTIES OF MY GOOD FAMILY IMMEDIATELY OR ELSE I SHALL BE TAKING THIS ISSUE UP WITH THE MINISTRY OF MAGIC,” bellowed Narcissa before the letter disintegrated into a pile of ash.

“Well Harry,” Tepthilda cooed, “That is certainly an interesting way to start the day.”

Fitzzy, however, was sitting on the other side of Vesta raised her goblet of orange juice and said, “Cheers Narcissa.”

Harry laughed at the plump charms teacher and continued with his breakfast before he noticed that Grady was now perched on the back of his chair and nipping at him.

“Oh, hello Grady, what do you have for me this morning?” asked Harry as the owl hopped down to the table and held out its leg to have the letter removed. As soon as he was relieved of his burden, Tommy began feeding the ancient owl some bacon rinds.

“Who is the letter from Harry?” Vesta asked curiously.

“Aunt Petunia,” replied her raven haired fiancé. “She wrote me a letter and sent an invitation to my cousin Dudley’s wedding.”

“Is he that fat guy who ate all the food when he went to visit last summer?” Tommy asked.

“Yeah, that would be him.”

“Who’d marry him?” Tommy said slyly before going back to his breakfast.

Harry chuckled and read the invitation to see when and where the wedding was to take place.

“So when are we going?”

“You want to go honey?”

Vesta smiled and said, “Of course, I want to go. Tommy’s right, I want to see who’d marry him. Besides I want to make sure that our wedding will be bigger than his.”

“Professor Sangeorge,” Harry said in mock surprise. “Did you just propose to me?”

“Maybe, kind of, sorta,” said Vesta slyly. “Would you like it to be one?” she asked remembering their earlier conversation about the topic.

“Maybe, kind of, sorta,” replied Harry as she had before. Then he gave her hand a squeeze.

“Are you two planning on getting married?” Fitzzy asked quickly before they could distract her with some other nonsense.

“Maybe, kind of, sorta,” Harry and Vesta replied together.

Harry walked into this classroom from his office just as the morning bell was ringing to signal the start of classes for the day. “Good morning everyone,” Harry said cheerfully.

“Morning sir,” several of the third years replied.

Smiling Harry said, “Well, it’s good to see that everyone is in a great mood this morning.”

“Well, sir,” Daphne Feeney, the seeker for the Desdrilla Quidditch team said, “we’ve heard that you’ve not been giving any homework yet this term and we’re hoping that you won’t give us any either.”

“Oh you did, did you?” replied Harry with a small smirk. “What makes you think you’re going to get out of homework then? I was helping the fifth years review for the upcoming O.W.L.’s.”

Suddenly six thirteen year olds were looking somewhat unhappy. However, Harry reached over and pulled his invisibility cloak off of the wheel that he had used the day before.

“Alright third years,” Harry said, “let’s get into three teams of two and let’s review what you’ve forgotten from over the summer.”

So for the remainder of the class period the third year students played the game and as the class was drawing to an end, Harry tallied up the scores and found that the team of Grant Emerson and Daphne Feeney had the highest points and they were rewarded with a slab of Honeydukes’ best chocolate as a reward. The two third years were pleased, Harry hadn’t done that with any of the other classes that played the review game.

Soon the bell rang and the third years rushed out of his classroom to go down to the potions laboratory on the ground floor and Harry replaced the invisibility cloak over the wheel and waited for his sponsored class to find their way from History of Magic to his classroom.

A very short time later, Harry was standing behind his podium and watching his sponsored class as they took their seats and waited for class to start.

Spying his two wayward boys take seats closer to the back of the classroom, Harry was once again reminded of his suspicions from the night of the New Term Feast.

‘Those two are up to something.’

However, the bell soon rang and Harry started class, “Good morning everyone.”

“Good morning,” some of them responded.

“I’m sure by now, many of you have heard about the review game that everyone has been playing in my class,” said the raven haired teacher.

All the girls nodded in anticipation to the game.

“I’m sorry to say that we will not be playing the game today, I forgot to prepare the questions for your class,” Harry admitted reluctantly. “However, I thought we might take a few minutes and everyone can tell me about their summers.”

All seven second years smiled, they were getting out of working today and they were pleased.

“Let’s start in the back shall we,” Harry said teasingly while looking right at Will Beagle. “Will, why you don’t start us out. Since you seem to have a very pronounced mischievous look on your face since you’ve returned to the school.”

Rolling his eyes at his favorite teacher, Will innocently says, “Sir, I’ve told you before, you’re just paranoid. Maybe you need some therapy?”